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ONE THOUSAND EVANGELISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS

REV. AQUILLA WEBB, D.D., LL.D.

ONE THOUSAND EVANGELISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

REV. AQUILLA WEBB, D.D., LL.D.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

REV. E. Y. MULLINS, D.D., LL.D.

PRESIDENT SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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NEW YORK
1930

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO THE
REV. WILLIAM WARREN LANDRUM, D.D., LL.D.
AN EVANGELISTIC PREACHER WHOSE
EXHORTATION IS INVARIABLY BASED
UPON A PROCLAIMED DOCTRINE
THIS BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

INTRODUCTION

There are many books of illustrations. They may be classified as good, bad and indifferent. The fact that these books are numerous indicates their popularity and a continuous demand. Pointed and graphic illustrations of Biblical truth are always welcomed by the earnest preacher. Many men are gifted with the faculty for finding illustrations and adapting them to the idea to be illustrated. Others must in large measure seek such illustrations from other sources. Certainly, if we are to imitate the Master himself, we will seek to make the truth graphic and clear by suitable illustrative material.

It is scarcely necessary to say that illustrations may easily be abused. Some public speakers use too many; others use too few. Some preachers illustrate truths that need no illustrating, and others leave faint impressions upon the minds of their hearers because they use none. A sermon without pictures and illustrations is not likely to be interesting. It requires other gifts of a very high character to overcome this defect. On the other hand, sermons which are filled with illustrations only bewilder by their variety and leave an equally indistinct impression.

An illustration very soon becomes the common property of the speaking public. The truths which men are proclaiming to-day in religion and in other departments are the common property of those engaged in their proclamation, and once a happy illustration is put in circulation, it naturally finds its way far and wide among public speakers. This is as it should be. No individual, of course, can preempt his own illustrations when he has once used them before an audience, and no speaker with the right attitude toward the spread of truth will desire to do so. He will strongly desire that his illustrations may be used as widely as possible.

The author of the present volume of illustrations has been a personal friend of the writer for a number of years, and his ideals and methods in the pulpit, long practiced in great pastorates, have admirably fitted him for the preparation of such a volume. He has a very clear and discerning intellect and a very profound appreciation of spiritual truth, and the happy faculty of expressing that truth forcibly and convincingly. Such a preacher is necessarily an excellent judge of good illustrations. Those which have been brought together in the present volume from many sources illustrate in a striking way the above statements. I have seen many volumes of sermon illustrations, but I know of none equal in range and variety and forcefulness to the illustrations contained in the present volume. Many of them are exceedingly striking, and I believe most public speakers, and especially ministers of the gospel, will find here a treasurehouse of illustrative material.

Dr. Webb has had in mind especially the evangelistic preacher. The illustrations are selected from this point of view. It is in the evangelistic meeting that the need is felt for forcible and pointed illustrative material. The direct appeal for decision in the proclamation of the gospel is tremendously reinforced when a telling illustration can be brought to bear to deepen the impression.

We have come to a new period of evangelistic activity and passion. Men have come to feel as they have not felt for many years the necessity for a gospel which regenerates the heart and gives the natural man a spiritual nature through the grace and power of God. It is a notable service to the cause of evangelism to prepare a volume of illustrations which the evangelistic preacher may keep at hand for the reinforcement of truth. Dr. Webb is to be congratulated upon his achievement. I do not hesitate to predict that the volume will have a very large sale, because it will be found helpful in so many ways to the preacher of the gospel.

E. Y. MULLINS.

Louisville, Kentucky.

FOREWORD

"Never make an exhortation until you have first preached a doctrine"—was the advice of my intimate friend and counsellor, the Rev. Dr. W. W. Landrum. His words remained with me in all my preparation for evangelistic services in my own church. The admonition also led me to devote myself more earnestly to the study of the great Doctrines of Scripture.

In the presentation of these great fundamentals I found that illustrations were needed to drive the truth home to an appeal for an immediate decision. Such was the method of great evangelists like Wesley and Whitefield, Moody, Chapman and Sunday. No one can fail to see the effectiveness of such method.

There are many books of illustrations but none devoted entirely to the work of evangelistic endeavor. This book has the one objective to provide illustrations that will help the evangelist to win souls to Christ.

A busy pastorate in a great city has prevented as complete an index of these illustrations as might be desired. A man on fire with evangelistic gift and zeal wants to win souls and may be trusted without index or topic to take and apply an illustration suggested by his theme.

With the sincere desire to aid any pastor who longs to be his own evangelist this volume is sent forth.

AQUILLA WEBB.

Philadelphia.

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ONE THOUSAND
EVANGELISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS

ONE THOUSAND EVANGELISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS

VALUE OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. Benefit of Illustration.

There can be no doubt, that, for the purpose of teaching, one illustration is worth a thousand abstractions. They are the windows of speech; through them truth shines; and ordinary minds fail to perceive truth clearly, unless it is presented to them through this medium.—E. P. Hood.

2. Illustrating.

I have generally found that the most intellectual auditors prefer to hear a simple scriptural and spiritual preaching. The late Judge McLean, of the United States Supreme Court, once said to me, "I was glad to hear you give that solemn personal incident in your discourse last night. Ministers now-a-days are getting above telling a story in a sermon; but I like it."—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.

3. Proper Use of Illustrations.

For the mass of the people it is well that there should be a goodly number of illustrations in our discourses. We have the example of our Lord for that, and most of the great preachers have abounded in similes, metaphors, allegories and anecdotes. But beware of overdoing this business. Illustrate richly and aptly, but not so much with parables imported from foreign sources as with apt similes growing out of the subject itself. Do not, however, think the illustration everything; it is the window, but of what use is the light which it admits, if you have nothing for the light to reveal? Garnish your dishes, but remember that the joint is the main point to consider.—C. H. Spurgeon.

4. Great Examples.

The greatest preacher the world has ever known was remarkable for his use of illustrations. Our Master never preached a sermon when He did not liken His truth to some every-day, ordinary object so that the little children in His company could take in the power and sweetness of the truth He taught. There is a great difference between the illustrations of Jesus and Paul. Paul lived in the city, and his truth was colored because of his contact with the people in the great centres of population; but Jesus lived in the country, and the sparrows flying through the air, the grass growing beneath His feet, and the lilies blooming on every side furnished His illustrations. We are following in right footsteps when we pattern after Jesus and Paul in illustrating truth.—J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D.

ASSURANCE.

5. Security of the Believer.

Mr. Meyer said that one time when he was pastor at Leicester there was a strike. The working people smashed and ruined homes in their riot. One day they threatened to come into a house where there was a big brother riveting shoes in the attic upstairs and a little fellow downstairs. The little fellow feared they were going to break the house open. He went to the stairs and called his big brother:

"Tom, Tom, they are going to smash this door open! Hurry up and come down."

Tom was a strong, well-built man and he came down and put his big body against the door and said:

"Now, youngster, you go on with your game. All the rioters in Leicester can't break this door open when brother Tom stands against it."

"And so," said Mr. Meyer, "the Devil often wants to come back into this house of mine, and I am afraid of him and when he comes along and swears he will take me by force, I go to the foot of the ascension ladder and cry:

"'Christ, Christ, stronger than the strong man armed, make haste and come down. The Devil is going to get me.'

"And He seems to come," said Mr. Meyer, "like the lightning flash and puts Himself against the door of my heart and all hell can't break the door open."—William E. Biederwolf.

6. Safe in Christ.

There used to be an old battered safe standing on Broadway, in New York, on which was the notice, "It stood the test; the contents were all saved." It had been in one of the hottest fires New York ever saw, but the old safe had carried its treasures safely through it all. No life so safe as that which is guided and controlled by Christ.—J. Ellis.

7. Everlasting Arms.

Mr. B., an eager business man in middle life, declared that, till he found a way of escape, to go to bed was to go to hell. Just as he was about to lose consciousness there had been almost always presented to his mind the idea and sensation of himself falling through boundless space. The perspiration stood on his face as he avowed that the phrase "bottomless pit" was to him overwhelming in its suggestiveness. This torture he had begun to experience while he was yet a schoolboy. At the school prayers on Sunday nights the boys had always sung Ken's evening hymn. The lines—

"Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed,"

had seemed terrible in their irony to one who dreaded nothing so much as his bed. Relief had not come to him until he was well on in manhood. Strolling one evening in a country churchyard, his eyes were arrested by the words on a gravestone, "Underneath are the Everlasting Arms," and in a flash of inspiration he saw his safety. That very night, as the solid platform of the earth was falling away from him, "he rested on the promise"—for so he described his mental attitude—and he affirmed that since that time he had always at his command a sense of physical comfort and safety upon which he could sleep as on a pillow. —The Spectator.

8. Secure in God.

Readers of Darwin will recall the description he gives of a marine plant which rises from a depth of one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet, and floats on the great breakers of the western ocean. The stem of this plant is less than an inch through; yet it grows and thrives and holds its own against the fierce smitings and pressures of breakers which no masses of rock, however hard, could long withstand. What is the secret of this marvellous resistance and endurance? How can this slender plant face the fury of the elements so successfully, and, in spite of storm and tempests, keep its hold, and perpetuate itself from century to century? The answer has leaped to every lip: It reaches down into the still depths, where it fixes its grasp after the fashion of the instinct that has been put into it, to the naked rocks; and no commotion of the waters can shake it from its fastenings. When a man has deep and inner clingings to God, when the roots of his life go down and take hold on God, mere surface agitation and pressures will not overcome him. He may be floated here and there within a given sweep like a plant bosomed on the sea, and there may be times when it is very rough and the strain is great, but he will survive it all and preserve his integrity. —F. A. Noble.

9. One Thing to Know.

In some meetings of the Salvation Army in Birmingham, England, one of the worst men in that city was converted. It was not long before some of his evil associates began to make fun of him, and such a conversation as the following ensued:

"You say you are a Christian; who was the father of Jesus Christ?"

"I don't know."

"Who was his mother?"

"I don't know."

"When did he live?"

"I don't know."

"How old was he when he died?"

"I don't know."

"How did he die?"

"I don't know."

"Well, you are a pretty Christian; you don't know who was the father of Jesus, or who was his mother, or when he lived, or when he died, or how he died,—what do you know?"

Then the rough, but genuine Christian man lifted his head and looking those who were taunting him in the face, replied, "I know that he saved me."—R. W. Dale.

10. False Reliance.

It was not that the Jews were to disown their descent from Abraham, but that they were not to rely on that descent as their means of salvation. There is a great deal of this looking to one's stock or to one's surroundings as a hope of heaven. One thinks that his mother's prayers will save him. Another, that his Church-membership is a fair ground of confidence. Another, that his being included in a good congregation will sweep him over danger. Every expectation of this sort is even more foolish than the confidence of the Jews in their earthly parentage. Begin not to say anything of the kind in your heart as a source of hope; and if you have begun to say it, quit it forthwith, and find something to rest in that will stand the test to which your faith must finally be subjected.—H. C. Trumbull.

11. Trembling Saints.

In the early days of emigration to the West a traveler once came, for the first time in his life, to the banks of the mighty Mississippi. There was no bridge. He must cross. It was early winter, and the surface of the mighty river was sheeted with ice. He knew nothing of its thickness, however, and feared to trust himself to it. He hesitated long, but night was coming on, and he must reach the other shore. At length, with many fears, and infinite caution, he crept out on his hands and knees, thinking thus to distribute his weight as much as possible, and trembling with every sound. When he had gone in this way painfully half way over he heard a sound of singing behind him. There in the dusk was a colored man driving a four-horse load of coal across upon the ice and singing as he went! Many a Christian creeps tremblingly out upon God's promises where another, stronger in faith, goes singing through life upheld by the same word. "Have faith in God." "Whoso putteth his trust in Jehovah shall be safe."—The Expositor.

12. Sign of Sonship.

An old man living on a gentleman's estate in Glamorganshire, used to go to the chapel along the gentleman's private walk, because he saved a considerable distance by going that way. Some unkind neighbor told the gentleman, who was a magistrate, about it. One day, when the poor old man was going to the house of God, he met him on his private walk, and said:

"What right have you on this path?"

"No right at all, sir," he answered; "but I thought you wouldn't mind an old man who has lived on your estate so many years going this way to the house of God, especially as it's so far the other way."

"Give me your stick!" said he sternly.

The trembling old saint gave him his stick, not knowing what to expect next. Then to his surprise, the gentleman, with a kind smile and in the gentlest tones, said to him, as he gave him in return his own walking-stick mounted with gold and bearing his own crest:

"Here, my good man, when any one asks you again what right you have this way, show them this, and tell them I gave it to you!"

That was what the father did to his returned prodigal son. He put a ring on his finger. It was a sign of sonship which he could show to any one who might tell him he had no right there.—The Clerical Library.

13. Stagnation and Rest.

Two artists each painted a picture to illustrate his conception of rest. The first chose for his scene a still, lone lake among the far-off mountains. The second threw on his canvas a thundering waterfall, with a fragile birch-tree bending over the foam; at the fork of a branch, almost wet with the cataract's spray, a robin sat on its nest. The first was only Stagnation; the last was Rest. For in rest there are always two elements — tranquillity and energy; silence and turbulence; creation and destruction; fearlessness and fearfulness. Thus it was in Christ.—Henry Drummond.

14. Resting-place for the Soul.

Years ago there came to the late Canon Hoare, of Tunbridge Wells, a rich man, then in his old age, to arrange with him about his burial-place, and after they had gone carefully over the churchyard, and had chosen the spot where he was to lie, Canon Hoare turned to him and said, "You have chosen a resting-place for your body, but have you yet found a resting-place for your soul?" Turning round and looking him full in the face, the old man answered: "You are the first clergyman who ever asked me that question." He went with Canon Hoare into his study, and, to make a long story short, he gave his heart to Christ, and found his resting-place, and in Canon Hoare's study to the day of his death hung a well-known picture representing the saving of a life from a wreck. It was the gift of the grateful man, who had found a resting-place not only for his body but for his soul. Ask yourself the question now, before you turn to another page: "Have I found a resting-place for my soul?"

15. Trusting.

I once illustrated the act of faith by the experience of a friend who was in an upper room of a hotel at night when the building took fire. He seized the escape rope that was in his room, swung out of the window, and lowered himself in safety to the sidewalk. He had a good opinion of that rope during the day when he saw it coiled up by his bedside, but it was only an opinion; when he believed on the rope, and trusted himself to the rope, it saved his life.—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.

16. Security of the Faithful.

Two persons may be in a life-boat, and both being in the boat are therefore equally safe; yet one may be full of fear, because he understands neither the qualities of the boat nor the principles upon which it is constructed; he sees the waves rolling, and he fears he shall be drowned; while the other man, well acquainted with the principles of construction, and knowing also those laws by which it is governed, has peace because he is confident. So it is with regard to the character of the Lord Jesus. If you have been taught by the Spirit of God to know what Christ is—to know the preciousness of his blood—to know its saving power—to know its superiority even to Satan, then you may sit under His shadow with great delight, and perfect confidence and comfort. But, at the same time, if you are really trusting in Christ, although your faith be feeble, you are not less secure. The timid man is as safe in the boat as the courageous man, because they depend, not upon their frames and feelings, but their safety consists in the fact of their being in the boat. So all who are really trusting in the Lord Jesus are equally secure, although there may be great differences in the power of faith.—J. W. Reeve, M.A.

17. Trusting in Christ a Sign of Life.

Suppose there is a person here who does not exactly know his age, and he wants to find the register of his birth, and he has tried and can not find it. Now, what is the inference that he draws from his not being able to tell the day of his birth? Well, I do not know what the inference may be, but I will tell you one inference he does not draw. He does not say, therefore, "I am not alive." If he did, he would be an idiot, for if the man is alive he is alive, whether he knows his birthday or not. And if the man really trusts in Jesus, and is alive from the dead, he is a saved soul, whether he knows exactly when and where he was saved or not.—C. H. Spurgeon.

18. Greatness of God Our Refuge.

Do you remember that sentence which Dr. Dale wrote in his diary when he was lying so prostrate with weakness, that even Sir Andrew Clark almost despaired of his recovery? Let me remind you of it. "When I became a little stronger," he wrote, "I endeavoured to find rest in remembering that Christ was my brother, but this did not come home to me. I thought of Him as Lord, and then I had peace." And, speaking of that experience in one of his sermons in Carrs Lane some months later, he said: "It was not sympathy I needed so much as the consciousness of being in the strong hands of One who was my Lord and the Lord of all. That steadied me at once and gave me rest of heart, and courage, and strength." And that is what will steady us in these troublous and disturbing times—to remember that God is more than sympathiser and comforter; that He is the mighty Lord, our Lord, and the Lord of all. That is what will steady us and bring us courage and strength—the remembrance, not simply of His gentleness and goodness, but of His greatness too. "The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also." Our difficulties loom so large before our eyes because we have allowed God to appear so little. But our difficulties would cease to stagger us if we only saw the great God!—God in all His majesty and power. For we should know then that "greater is He that is for us than all they that are against us."—J. D. Jones.

19. God's Righteousness Our Refuge.

In that marvellous story, Hawthorne's "Marble Faun," when Miriam has fallen into a great sin and comes to Hilda, and Hilda will not receive her because of that sin, bidding her not to come nearer, and Miriam cries, "Because I have sinned I need your friendship the more," Hilda cries: "If I were one of God's angels, incapable of stain, I would keep ever at your side and try to lead you upward. But I am a poor, lonely girl, and God has given me my purity, and told me to take it back to Him unstained, and I dare not associate with the criminal lest I carry back to Him a stained and spotted garment." It is the consciousness of a dormant impurity in the pure Hilda that makes her dread to receive to her heart the impure as her companion. It is not Hilda's perfection of righteousness, it is her imperfection, that makes her fail as a refuge to poor, sinful, despairing Miriam. Now, God's righteousness is of the kind that never can be harmed.—Lyman Abbott.

20. Full Confidence.

A young man, distressed about his soul, had confided his difficulties to a friend, who discerned that he was striving to obtain everlasting life by great efforts. He spoke of "sincere prayers" and "heart-felt desires" after salvation, but continually lamented that he did not "feel any different in spite of it all."

His friend did not answer him at first but presently interrupted him with the inquiry: "W——, did you ever learn to float?"

"Yes, I did," was the surprised reply.

"And did you find it easy to learn?"

"Not at first," he answered.

"What was the difficulty?" his friend pursued.

"Well, the fact was, I could not lie still; I could not believe or realize that the water would hold me up without any effort of my own, so I always began to struggle, and, of course, down I went at once."

"And then?"

"Then I found out that I must give up all the struggle, and just rest on the strength of the water to bear me up. It was easy enough after that; I was able to lie back in the fullest confidence that I should never sink."

"And is not God's word more worthy of your trust than the changeable sea? He does not bid you wait for feelings. He commands you just to rest in Him, to believe His word, and accept His gift. His message of life reaches down to you in your place of ruin and death, and His word to you now is: 'Believe ye that I am able to do this?' He is able to save to the uttermost."—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

21. Confidence.

'Twas when the sea's tremendous roar
A little bark assailed;
And pallid fear, with awful power,
O'er each on board prevailed.

Save one, the captain's darling son,
Who fearless viewed the storm,
And playful, with composure smiled
At danger's threatening form.

"Why sporting thus," a seaman cried,
"Whilst dangers overwhelm?"
"Why yield to grief?" the boy replied,
"My Father's at the helm."

22. "Better Further On."

I hear it singing, singing sweetly,
Softly in an undertone;
Singing as if God had taught it,
"It is better further on."

Night and day it sings the same song,
Sings it while I sit alone,
Sings it so the heart can hear it,
"It is better further on."

Sits upon the grave and sings it,
Sings it when the heart would groan,
Sings it when the shadows darken,
"It is better further on."

Further on! how much further?
Count the milestones one by one?
No, no counting, only trusting,
"It is better further on."

ATONEMENT.

23. Universality of the Atonement.

Suppose a will is made by a rich man bequeathing certain property to certain unknown persons, described only by the name of "the elect." They are not described otherwise than by this term, and all agree that although the maker of the will had the individuals definitely in his mind, yet that he left no description of them, which neither the persons themselves, the courts, nor any living mortal can understand. Now such a will is of necessity altogether null and void. No living man can claim under such a will, and none the better though these elect were described as residents of Oberlin. Since it does not embrace all the residents of Oberlin, and does not define which of them, all is lost. All having an equal claim and none any definite claim, none can inherit. If the atonement were made in this way, no living man would have any valid reason for believing himself one of the elect, prior to his reception of the Gospel. Hence he would have no authority to believe and receive its blessings by faith.

In fact, the atonement must be wholly void—on this supposition—unless a special revelation is made to the persons for whom it is intended.—C. G. Finney, D.D.

24. God's Sacrifice.

A story has been often told of the fondness of parents for their children; how in a famine in the East a father and mother were reduced to absolute starvation, and the only possibility of preserving the life of the family was to sell one of the children into slavery. So they considered it. The pinch of hunger became unbearable, and their children pleading for bread tugged so painfully at their heartstrings, that they must entertain the idea of selling one to save the lives of the rest. They had four sons. Who of these should be sold? It must not be the first: how could they spare their firstborn? The second was so strangely like his father that he seemed a reproduction of him, and the mother said that she would never part with him. The third was so singularly like the mother that the father said he would sooner die than that this dear boy should go into bondage; and as for the fourth, he was their Benjamin, their last, their darling, and they could not part with him. They concluded that it was better for them all to die together than willingly to part with any one of their children. Do you not sympathize with them? I see you do. Yet God so loved us that, to put it very strongly, He seemed to love us better than His only Son, and did not spare Him that He might spare us. He permitted His Son to perish from among men "that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."—C. H. Spurgeon.

25. Deliverance Through Sacrifice.

On the 10th of June, 1770, the town of Port-au-Prince, in Hayti, was utterly overthrown by an earthquake. From one of the fallen houses the inmates had fled, except a negro woman, the nurse of her master's infant child. She would not desert her charge, though the walls were even then giving way. Rushing to its bedside, she stretched forth her arms to enfold it. The building rocked to its foundation; the roof fell in. Did it crush the hapless pair? The heavy fragments fell indeed upon the woman, but the infant escaped unharmed, for its noble protectoress extended her bended form across the body, and at the sacrifice of her own life, preserved her charge from destruction.—R. Brewin.

26. Cost of the Water of Life.

I have heard that during the battle of Fredericksburg there was a little patch of ground which was occupied in turn by the contending forces. It was covered with the dead and the dying; and all through the afternoon of a weary day the cry was heard: "Water, water!" A Southern soldier begged of his captain to be allowed to answer those piteous cries, but met with the refusal: "No; it would be certain death." He persisted, however, saying: "Above the roar of artillery and the crack of the muskets I hear those cries for water: let me go!" He set out with a bucket of water and a tin cup; for awhile the bullets sang around him, but he seemed to bear a charmed life. Then, as the Federals beyond the field perceived his purpose, the firing gradually ceased; and for an hour and a half there was an armistice, while the soldier in gray, in full sight of both armies, went about on his errand of mercy. Verily, that was the truce of God!

And this was the kindness of our Lord. He came from Heaven to bring the cup of cold water to the dying men. Ah, that was the greatest kindness that ever was known. It was the most sublime heroism too. But the firing did not cease when He came to us with the water from the well beside the gate at Bethlehem; His mercy toward us cost Him His life. What shall we render unto the Lord for His loving kindness?—D. J. Burrell.

27. Cost of Redemption.

A little boy about ten years old was once bidden by his father to go and do some work in the field. He went as he was told, but took little pains about it, and made very slow progress in his task. By and by his father called to him very kindly, and said: "Willie, can you tell me how much you have cost me since you have been born?" The father waited a while, and then said that he reckoned he had "cost him a hundred pounds." The lad opened his eyes and wondered at the expense he had been. He seemed to see the hundred sovereigns all glittering before him, and in his heart determined to repay his father by doing all he could to please him. The reproof sank deeper into his heart than a hundred stripes. When I read the story it occurred to me: "What have I cost my Saviour?" Then I remembered the words, "Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."—G. Everard.

28. Blood-Shedding as an Expression of Love.

A certain Asiatic queen, departing this life, left behind her three accomplished sons, all arrived to years of maturity. The young princes were at strife as to who should pay the highest respect to their loyal mother's memory. To give scope for their generous contentions they agreed to meet at the place of interment, and there present the most honorable gift they knew how to devise, or were able to procure. The eldest came, and exhibited a sumptuous monument, consisting of the richest materials, and ornamented with the most exquisite workmanship. The second ransacked all the beauties of the blooming creation, and offered a garland of such admirable colours and delightful odours as had never been seen before. The youngest appeared, without any pompous preparations, having only a crystal basin in one hand, and a silver bodkin in the other. As soon as he approached he threw open his breast, pierced a vein which lay opposite to his heart, received the blood in the transparent vase, and, with an air of affectionate reverence, placed it on the tomb. The spectators, struck with the sight, gave a shout of general applause, and immediately gave preference to this oblation. If it was reckoned such a singular expression of love to expend a few of those precious drops for the honour of a parent, oh, how matchless! how ineffable was the love of Jesus in pouring out all His vital blood for the salvation of His enemies!—Student's Handbook of Scripture Doctrines.

29. Cost of Salvation.

"Mamma," said a little child to her mother when she was being put to bed at night—"Mamma, what makes your hand so scarred and twisted, and unlike other people's hands?" "Well," said the mother, "my child, when you were younger than you are now, years ago, one night, after I had put you to bed, I heard a cry, a shriek, upstairs. I came up, and found the bed was on fire, and you were on fire; and I took hold of you, and I tore off the burning garments, and while I was tearing them off and trying to get you away I burned my hand, and it has been scarred and twisted ever since, and hardly looks any more like a hand; but I got that, my child, in trying to save you." I wish to-day I could show you the burned hand of Christ—burned in plucking you out of the fire; burned in snatching you away from the flame. Aye, also the burned foot, and the burned brow, and the burned heart—burned for you. "By His stripes we are healed."—T. De Witt Talmage.

30. He Gave His Life for His Sheep.

Out on one of the great sheep-ranges of the Northwest of America, a shepherd was left in a very lonely station in charge of a large flock of sheep. He lived in a little cottage which was fitted up with the necessary comforts for all seasons of the year. There was no other house anywhere near. This man, Hans Neilson, lived there with only his dog Shep for company. After he had lived out there for two years there came a dreadfully severe winter. The sheep-sheds were old, and the shelter for the sheep was poor. New sheds were to be built in the following spring. It was hard work for Hans, but he succeeded in saving all his sheep until the last and most violent blizzard of all. The wind blew and the snow fell for three days. After it was over, help was sent from headquarters to see how Hans had fared. They found his dead body near the sheep-folds, and his dog standing on guard by his master. The sheep were all alive and well, and it was quite clear to the men that Hans had been trying to place additional protection at the broken places in the old sheds when his brave battle ceased and he was overcome by the intense cold. He might have saved his life by neglecting the sheep, but he had literally given his life for his sheep.—J. Learmount.

31. In Our Stead.

She was about to pass away, and her hand lay thin and transparent on the white counterpane. Her soul was being taught by the Holy Ghost, and her vision was catching sight of the hills of Beulah Land. She roused herself from her stupor, and putting her fingers on the palm of her hand, she looked up and said: "There is no mark here; but He was wounded for my transgressions." Silence.

Again she opened her eyes, and as her lips moved she raised her hand to her brow, and said: "There are no thorns here; but He was wounded for my transgressions." Silence again.

A third time she moved, and putting a hand upon her breast, she said: "There is no spear thrust here; but He was wounded for my transgressions," and she passed away. That is the Gospel as God tells it. Christ died in your stead; have you ever thanked Him? Did He really do so? Is He a real Saviour? Is His death a real fact? Has it a real bearing on my soul? Oh, it has! "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," that is the Gospel.—John Robertson.

32. Our Substitute.

A story is told that, during our late sad war, a number of Southerners were arrested by a general of the Union army, commanding a district in one of the border states, who tried them by court martial, under the general charge of killing Union soldiers by shooting them from the bushes as they passed in small detachments through the country. They were all found guilty, and sentenced to be shot. After the sentence, the general allowed them to draw lots, and selected a few in this way for execution. Those selected by the fatal lot were to be shot the following morning. Tried, condemned, and waiting the execution of penalty, their condition was a sad one. Among the number thus waiting in despair was a middle-aged man, a man of family, who was in deep distress at the fate which awaited him. During the evening a young man, a neighbor of the condemned, and one who had himself been of the number arrested, but had escaped the fatal lot, came in and made the astonishing proposal to this man that he would take his place and die in his stead. He said: "I have no family to mourn my loss. I trust I am prepared to die; and I am willing, for the sake of your family, to die for you. The general says he will consent to the change, and accept my death in place of yours as satisfactory to the law." The generous offer was accepted by the surprised and overcome man, and the substitute remained under the guard until the morning came. With the morning, the young man was led out upon the parade ground with his fellow-prisoners. A company of soldiers, with loaded guns, faced them and at the command "Fire," he fell, dying voluntarily for another.—Major Whittle.

33. Christ's Vicarious Death.

A single verse, written on paper, now yellow with age, hangs on the wall of a nobleman's study in London. It has a remarkable history, and has, in two notable instances, at least, been blessed of God to conversion. The verse was originally composed by Dr. Valpy, the eminent Greek scholar and author of some standard school books. He was converted late in life, and wrote this verse as a confession of faith:

"In peace let me resign my breath,
  And Thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
  But Jesus died for me."

On one occasion Dr. Marsh was visiting the house of Lord Roden, where he held a Bible reading with the family. He mentioned Dr. Valpy's conversion by way of illustration in the course of his remarks, and recited the verse. Lord Roden was particularly struck with the lines, wrote them out, and affixed them to the walls of his study, where they still are. Lord Roden's hospitable mansion was often full of visitors, among whom were many old army officers. One of these was General Taylor, who served with distinction under Wellington at Waterloo. He had not, at that time, thought much on the subject of religion, and preferred to avoid all discussion of it. But soon after the paper was hung up he went into the study to talk with his friend alone, and his eyes rested for a few moments upon the verse. Later in the day Lord Roden, upon entering his study, came upon the general standing before the paper and reading it with earnest face. At another visit the host noticed that whenever General Taylor was in the study his eyes rested on the verse. At length Lord Roden broke the ice by saying: "Why, General, you will soon know that verse by heart." "I know it now by heart," replied the general, with emphasis and feeling. A change came over the general's spirit and life. No one who was intimately acquainted with him could doubt its reality. During the following two years he corresponded regularly with Lord Roden about the things which concerned his peace, always concluding his letters by quoting Dr. Valpy's verse. At the end of that time the physician who attended General Taylor wrote to Lord Roden to say that his friend had departed in peace, and that the last words which fell from his dying lips were those which he had learned to love in his lifetime. A young relative of the family, an officer who served in the Crimea, also saw it, but turned carelessly away. Some months later Lord Roden received the intelligence that his young acquaintance was suffering from pulmonary disease, and was desirous of seeing him without delay. As he entered the sick-room the dying man stretched out both hands to welcome him; at the same time repeating Dr. Valpy's simple lines. "They have been God's message," he said, "of peace and comfort to my heart in this illness, when brought to my memory, after days of darkness and distress, by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter."—C. H. Spurgeon.

34. Substitutionary Death of Christ.

In one of the back courts of Paris a fire broke out in the dead of night. The houses were built so that the higher stories overhung the foundation. A father, who was sleeping with his children in the top garret, was suddenly awakened by the flames and smoke. The man sprang out of bed and vaulted to the window of the opposite house. Then placing his feet firmly against the window sill, he launched his body forward and grasped the window of the burning house, and shouting to his eldest boy he said: "Now, my boy, make haste; crawl over my body." This was done. The second and third followed. The fourth, a little fellow, would only do so after much persuasion; but as he was passing on he heard his father say: "Quick! Quick! Quick! I can not hold out much longer," and as the voices of friends were heard announcing his safety, the hold of the strong man relaxed, and with a heavy crash fell a lifeless corpse into the court below. So Jesus in His own sacred body provides a bridge whereby we may cross the chasm between us and God. The way home is through the rent vail, the crucified flesh of our Immanuel.—W. T. Aitken, M.A.

35. A Substitute.

The story of the Napoleonic campaigns is familiar to all, how in the early wars a man was drafted in France, and being unable to go to the field himself hired a substitute and paid a good price for him, who went to the war, and fell on one of the battlefields. In a subsequent draft the same man was drafted again. He went to the recruiting office and produced his papers, proving he had hired and payed for a substitute, who had died on the field; and entry was accordingly made against his name: "Died in the person of his substitute on the battlefield of Rivoli."—A. T. Pierson.

36. Substitute.

One of our boys had committed an offence so bad that Mr. Gibb, his teacher, though rarely using the rod, felt it necessary to make an example of him. The punishment was to be publicly inflicted, "that others might fear." But when the culprit, who had been only a few days in our school, was stripped, he was such a living skeleton, that the master had not the heart to beat him. At his wit's end what to do—for the crime must be punished—it occurred to him to make such an appeal as, to compare small things to great, reminds us of the mystery of salvation, and the love of Him who "was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and by whose stripes we are healed." Turning to the others: "It goes," he said, "against my heart to lay a hand on that miserable creature. Will any one take his place, and be punished in his stead?" The words had hardly left his lips when, with tears of pity brimming in his eyes, a boy stepped bravely out, pulled his jacket off, and pushing the culprit aside, offered his own back and shoulders to the rod. A ragged schoolboy, he was a hero in his way, presenting an example of courage and kindness, of sympathy and unselfishness, rare in schools —or anywhere else.—T. Guthrie, D.D.

37. Name Above Every Name.

We speak of humanity as fickle, frail, prone to go astray, sinful, vile, so many children of the Devil. Such speech expresses a truth when it refers to men taken as they come. Applied to humanity in the proper sense it is a stupendous criminal libel. Do not judge San Francisco by the hoodlums. The thugs are not India. And pray never commit the error of regarding the human beings to whom so many hard names can be applied, as comprising humanity. The true notion of mankind takes in Jesus. The actual value of humanity is common humanity plus Jesus Christ. He belongs to it as truly as Socrates, Gustavus Adolphus, or William Kemler. He was no naturalized citizen of earth, but born here. Indict the race as you will. You can set forth a very long account against it,—sad, serious, most compromising. One item is Cæsar Borgia, another is Captain Kidd; I am a third, you are a fourth. Put them all down; do not omit any, black though the page may be. But, oh, bookkeeper, critic, censor of thy kind, I adjure thee by the sacred majesty of truth, write up the credit page as well! Write St. Paul's name upon it. Enter Judson there. Enter John Henry Newman on that page. Enter Marcus Aurelius, Alfred the Great, George Washington. But at the top of it, in letters of living light which at once God, all on earth, even the blind, all men, angels, and devils can read, write that Name which is above every name! It belongs there, and it will go far to balance the account. I can never admit that sin is a good, or even a necessary concomitant of good. But this I believe, that a sinning humanity, with Jesus for its Masterpiece and Redeemer, is a finer thing than a sinless humanity with no Jesus could ever have been.—E. Benjamin Andrews, D.D.

38. Sacrificial Effort.

A farmer in North Carolina once drove with two high-mettled horses into town. Stopping in front of one of the stores, he was about to enter when his horses took fright. He sprang in front of them, and heroically seized the reins. Maddened by strange noises, the horses dashed down the street, the man still clinging to the bridles. On they rushed, until the horses, wild with frenzy, rose on their haunches, and leaping upon the man all came with a crash to the earth. When people came and rescued the bleeding body of the man, and found him in death's last agony, a friend, bending tenderly over him, asked: "Why did you sacrifice your life for horses and wagon?"

He gasped with his breath, as his spirit departed: "Go and look in the wagon."

They turned, and there, asleep on the straw, lay his little boy.

As they laid the mangled form of the hero in his grave, no one said: "The sacrifice is too great." —L. G. Broughton.

39. Penalty Unnecessary.

A person once said to me: "I hate your God; your God demands blood. I don't believe in such a God. My God is merciful to all. I do not know your God."

If you will turn to Lev. xvii., you will find why God demands blood: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Suppose there was a law that man should not steal, but no penalty was attached to stealing; some man would have my pocket-book before dinner. If I threatened to have him arrested, he would snap his fingers in my face. He would not fear the law if there was no penalty. It is not the law that people are afraid of; it is the penalty attached.

Do you suppose God has made a law without a penalty? What an absurd thing it would be! Now, the penalty for sin is death: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." I must die, or get somebody to die for me. If the Bible doesn't teach that, it doesn't teach anything. And that is where the atonement of Jesus Christ comes in.—D. L. Moody.

40. Source of Salvation.

I have read somewhere an ancient Hindu legend to this effect. In an extensive district of the country•a terrible famine long prevailed. The parched land refused to yield any sustenance for man or beast, and the wretched people were perishing miserably. A princess of the country knew of their condition and boldly went forth to see for herself; and what she saw of their sufferings filled her with unutterable compassion. The wise men had declared that the only hope for the country was that some worthy person should die for them and so remove the heavy curse. She quietly resolved to become the needed sacrifice, and retiring among the mountains had a grave dug. She crept into it, and was buried; and forth from her grave there gushed a pure stream of water. It rushed down the valley, gathering volume as it flowed, and went forth into the wide plain a river bearing freshness, fertility and life to all the land. That river of life in the old legend did not originate in the grave of the dead princess, but in the warm loving heart of a noble maiden, who, in mighty compassion, gave her life for her perishing people. Even so, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not its beginning in the manger of Bethlehem, in the ministry of John, the Baptist, in the Galilean ministry of Jesus, nor yet in the atoning death upon the cross, but in the loving heart of the Eternal God who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that all might have eternal life in Him.—W. T. Fleck.

41. Christ the Saviour of the World.

In September, 1878, a dreadful accident happened on the Thames, when an excursion steamer, named the *Princess Alice*, was cut down by the *Bywell Castle*, an outward bound merchant steamship. More than seven hundred persons that day found a watery grave. Among the brave efforts that were made on that occasion to save the drowning people, one of the noblest was made by a man who was in charge of a small boat at some distance from the scene of the collision. Rowing with all his might into the midst of the struggling passengers, he pulled several of them one after another into his little boat, which was now full and in danger of sinking, and prepared to row away. But when he saw the white, upturned faces of many others, and heard their piteous cries: "Oh, save me, sir!" "Don't leave me, sir!" it is said that in agony he threw up his arms and cried: "Oh, God, that I had a bigger boat! Oh, God! that I had a bigger boat!" His heart was large enough to save all who were perishing, but his boat was too small; his power was limited. It is not so with Christ. He is the Life-Boat of perishing humanity, and in Him there is room for the whole race, for "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—R. Brewin.

42. Royal Mediator.

Sometimes there were more kings than one at Sparta, who governed by joint authority. A king was occasionally sent to some neighboring state in character of a Spartan ambassador. Did he, when so sent, cease to be a king of Sparta, because he was also an ambassador? No, he did not divest himself of his royal dignity, but only added to it that of public deputation. So Christ, in becoming man, did not cease to be God; but though He ever was, and still continued to be, King of the whole creation, acted as the voluntary Servant and Messenger of the Father.—F. W. Farrar, D.D.

43. Sight of the Saviour's Suffering.

Do you not know that this simple story of a Saviour's kindness is to redeem all nations? The hard heart of this world's obduracy is to be broken before that story. There is in Antwerp, Belgium, one of the most remarkable pictures I ever saw. It is "The Descent of Christ from the Cross." It is one of Rubens' pictures. No man can stand and look at that "Descent from the Cross," as Rubens pictured it, without having his eyes flooded with tears, if he have any sensibility at all. It is an overmastering picture—one that stuns you, and staggers you, and haunts your dreams. One afternoon a man stood in that cathedral looking at Rubens' "Descent from the Cross." He was all absorbed in that scene of a Saviour's sufferings when the janitor came in and said:

"It is time to close up the cathedral for the night. I wish you would depart." The pilgrim, looking at that "Descent from the Cross," turned around to the janitor and said: "No, no; not yet. Wait until they get Him down." Oh, it is the story of a Saviour's suffering kindness that is to capture the world.—T. De Witt Talmage.

√ 44. Scourging Jesus.

Dr. Alexander Whyte tells the story of a man who dreamed that he saw Jesus tied to a whipping-post, and a soldier was scourging Him. He saw the whip in the soldier's hand, with its thick lashes studded here and there with bits of lead, which were intended to cut into the flesh. And as the soldier brought the whip down on the bare shoulders of Jesus, the dreamer shuddered when he saw the marks and blood-stains it left behind. And when the soldier raised his hand to strike again the dreamer rushed forward intending to stop him. As he did so the soldier turned round and the dreamer recognized—himself. We often think how cruel those men must have been who scourged and crucified Jesus. But remember that whenever we do wrong we, too, cause the heart of Jesus to bleed with sorrow and pain.—Rev. E. E. Lark.

45. Sorrowful Unto Death.

A devoted mother, in her old age, failed in her mind—got dottled, as we say. Her son had left home, a stalwart, bright lad, and he went away to Jamaica to seek his fortune. He stayed there a good many years; and after he had accumulated wealth he came home.

Travelling was not so easy and luxurious in those days, but he felt he must come home to see his mother. When he entered the old home, those many years in Jamaica had written their marks on the buoyant frame, had sprinkled the grey hairs thickly upon his once raven locks, and when he came in the old lady said she did not know him.

She looked at him, but she did not know him. He had only a few days to spend with his old mother and the white-haired man who had left his mother's side, a bright young lad, said: "Mother, do you not know me? I am your son."

"No, no, you are not my son. My son was a bright young lad; you are not my son."

"Mother," he said. "I am your son John."

"No, no! You are not my son. Go away! Go away! My son was a bright young lad"; and positively, with a breaking heart, he went back to Jamaica without his mother having recognized him.

They said that at the station the heart of him was so sore and sad that he could hardly bear up for the journey; he was stricken with illness through sheer sorrow that she whom he loved had never received him.

Ah, Jesus Christ, in that picture of human life we can get a little inkling of what Thou didst feel, when Thou didst come to Thine own, and they refused Thee, when they would not have Thee. I know now why Thy soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.—John Robertson.

46. Christ Gave Himself Up for Us.

When the *Birkenhead* with five hundred soldiers on board, was sinking, the soldiers were drawn up in their ranks on the deck of the ship while the women and children were quietly put into one of the boats. Every one of them did as he was directed, and there was not a murmur or a cry among them till the vessel made her final plunge. Even so, silently and uncomplainingly, did Christ "give Himself up" for our salvation.—R. Brewin.

47. Shadow of the Coming Cross.

Those who maintain that the crucifixion was an afterthought in the mind of Christ; that no vision of it clouded His pathway, and no place was assigned for it when He began to preach and to teach, have read those narratives to very little purpose. Holman Hunt, the modern "evangelist of art," was much nearer the truth on this matter when he painted his celebrated picture, "The Shadow of Death," in which he clearly reveals his opinion that, whilst yet a horny-handed workman in the obscure carpenter's shop at Nazareth, making yokes and ploughs for the husbandmen of Galilee, the shadow of the coming cross fell upon the pathway of Christ, and gave an unwonted solemnity to a young manhood, in all else so natural.—J. Cuttell.

ATTRACTIVE POWER OF CHRIST.

48. Advocacy of Christ.

There is only one Advocate in all the universe that can plead our cause in the last judgment. Sometimes in earthly courts attorneys have specialties, and one man succeeds better in patent cases, another in insurance cases, another in criminal cases, another in land cases, another in will cases, and his success generally depends upon his sticking to that specialty. I have to tell you that Christ can do many things; but it seems to me that His specialty is to take the bad case of the sinner, and plead it before God until He gets eternal acquittal. But what plea can He make? Sometimes an attorney in court will plead the innocence of the prisoner. That would be inappropriate for us; we are all guilty. Sometimes he tries to prove an alibi. Such a plea will not do in our case. The Lord found us in all our sins, and in the very place of our iniquity. Sometimes an attorney will plead the insanity of the prisoner, and say he is irresponsible on that account. That plea will never do in our case. We sinned against light, knowledge, and the dictates of our own consciences. What, then, shall the plea be? Christ will say: "Look at all these wounds. By all these sufferings, I demand the rescue of this man from sin and death and hell. Constable, knock off the shackles—let the prisoner go free." "Who is he that condemneth?"—T. De Witt Talmage.

49. Appeal of the Cross.

A German student, who had strayed far into doubt and sin, went one day in a fit of desperate levity to see the aged pastor who had been in years past his spiritual guide. "My son," said the saint of God, "tell me your sins, that I may show you how to be delivered from them." Immediately the young man began to recite a shameful list of wrong-doings, and again and again, with passionate emphasis for each sin, pronounced the words: "But I don't care for that." The other listened patiently until he had done, and then quietly asked him to comply with a simple request. "To-night," he said, "and every night when you retire to rest, kneel down and say this: 'Oh, Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast died upon the Cross for me, that my sins may be forgiven;—but I don't care for that,' and come back at the end of a week and tell me your sins again." Consent was lightly given, and for three nights the words were said. The fourth saw a penitent, white and trembling, at the old man's door, asking for admission. "I can't say it, and I do care," was his faltering confession. The appeal of the Cross had reached his heart.—F. B. Macnutt.

50. Our Crown Prince.

At the Battle of Sadowa, July 3, 1866, when the pickets closed in the morning, Von Moltke saluted King William and said: "To-day your Majesty will win not only the battle, but the campaign." At noon it did not seem so. Prince Frederick Charles' Corps were withering under the hottest artillery fire of this century save that at Gettysburg, just three years earlier to the hour. In a few minutes they must give way. Hark! what seems this cheering on the left? New cannons boom, and the Austrian fire slackens. Ah! Von Moltke knows. The Crown Prince has arrived with his fresh corps. He has stormed the heights of Chlum; he enfilades the whole Austrian line; Benedek is beaten; on, on to Vienna; the war is ended!

Brothers, let us away bravely, each to his place in Jehovah's hosts! Our Crown Prince, with fresh forces right from heaven, has reached the field.—E. Benjamin Andrews, D.D.

51. Architect Needed.

The late Mr. Alexander, the eminent architect, was under cross-examination at Maidstone by Serjeant, afterwards Baron, Garrow, who wished to detract from the weight of his testimony, and, after asking him what was his name, he proceeded: "You are a builder?" "No, sir, I am an architect." "They are much the same." "I beg your pardon, sir, I can not admit that. I consider them to be totally different." "Oh, indeed! Perhaps you will state wherein the difference consists?" "An architect, sir, conceives the design, prepares the plan, draws out the specifications—in short, supplies the mind; the builder is merely the brick-layer or the carpenter. The builder is the machine; the architect the power that puts it together and sets it going." "Oh, very well, Mr. Architect, that will do. And now, after your very ingenious distinction without a difference, perhaps you can inform the court who was the architect of the Tower of Babel?" The reply, for promptness and wit, is not to be rivalled in the history of rejoinder: "There was no architect, sir, and hence the confusion."—O. T. Anecdotes.

52. How Christ Draws.

A gentleman who was being urged to accept Christ, said to the preacher: "There are some things in the Bible that seem to me to be highly contradictory. Christ must have overestimated Himself. Once He declared that He would draw all men unto Him, and yet He hasn't done it. I know you will remind me that He hasn't yet been lifted up before all men, but even that does not alter the case. Men go to church and listen to you; they even read the Bible, and then go away and live worldly lives. They devote themselves to money-making and sensuality, and are not drawn to your Christ—at least, not more than one of them in a hundred is."

"Do you believe that there is such a thing as gravitation?" the preacher asked.

"Certainly I do."

"Well, what is it?"

"I believe philosophers define it as being an invisible force by which all matter is drawn to the center of the earth."

The preacher stepped to the window. "Come here," he said. "Do you see those gilt balls?" pointing to the pawnbroker's sign across the street.

"Yes."

"How about the power of gravitation now? You say that it draws all matter to the center of the earth, and yet those balls have been hanging there for three years."

"Oh, well!" said the young man, his face flushing, "they are fastened to that iron rod."

"Yes," replied the preacher, "and it is so with the men of whom you speak. One is bound fast by the lusts of the flesh; another is anchored by his ambitions; and still another finds his business an iron rod that holds him fast."

Christ draws men wherever He is lifted up to their view, but they can resist Him if they will.—Mattie M. Boteler.

53. Moral Adaptability.

A Moravian missionary once went to the West Indies, to preach to the slaves. He found it impossible for him to carry out his design so long as he bore to them the relation of a mere missionary. They were driven into the field very early in the morning, and returned late at night with scarcely strength enough to roll themselves into their cabins, and in no condition to be profited by instruction. They were savage toward all of the race and rank of their masters. He determined to reach the slaves by becoming himself a slave. He was sold, that he might have the privilege of working by their sides, and preaching to them as he worked with them. Do you suppose the master or the pastor could have touched the hearts of those miserable slaves as did that man who placed himself in their condition, and went among them, and lived as they lived, suffered as they suffered, toiled as they toiled, that he might carry the Gospel to them? This missionary was but following the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, who took on Him the nature of men, came among them, and lived as they lived, that He might save them from their sins.—H. W. Beecher.

54. Adaptation to Needs.

On a famous bridge spanning the river which flows through an Austrian city there are twelve statues of Jesus, representing Him in various characteristic vocations of life. There is Christ as physician, teacher, carpenter—Christ in twelve separate callings. The weary men who cross this bridge at morning, noon, and night may turn their eyes toward a semblance of that Christ who, touching human experience at every point, has brought God within the compass of every devout heart willing to receive Him. It is this universality of Christ's adaptation to the needs of men which constrains them to see in Him the perfect manifestation of God. When once this conviction has seized a man, he will ignore the metaphysical difficulties which pure reason may suggest and, out of his consciousness that Christ fulfills the deepest requirements of his nature, he will exclaim with the hesitant but loyal disciple of old, "My Lord and my God!"—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

55. Big Brother.

A little boy of mine came home one day bearing the marks of battle. Of course it was very wrong, but let me tell you fathers and mothers, the boy who does not sometimes get into a scrimmage and come out on the right side is not likely to do much in this world. My boy came home, and, of course, I rebuked him—only officially. I found that he had been in conflict with a boy much larger than himself. I said: "Were you frightened, Arthur?" He said: "No." I said: "You ought to have been. The boy was larger than you." "I wasn't, dad," he replied. "You see, Norman (his big brother) was only just around the corner!" It is a grand thing to have a brother in reserve! Oh, my brothers, reverently I can tell the poorest, vilest, weakest man in London that if only he will set his face toward the light, though all the powers of hell give him battle, he has a big omnipotent Brother, not around the corner, but in the heart!—A. T. Guttery.

56. Friend at Court.

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman recently told this story of one of his friends who was a boyhood companion of Robert Lincoln. He entered the Civil War and went to the front. When Robert Lincoln found that he was a private soldier, he said to a friend: "Write, and tell him to write to me, and I will intercede with father, and get him something better." The young soldier said: "I never took advantage of the offer, but you do not know what a comfort it was to me. Often after a weary march I would throw myself on the ground and say: 'If it becomes beyond human endurance, I can write to Bob Lincoln and get relief; and I would rather have his intercession than that of the cabinet, because he is a son.'" Every true Christian knows that he has the best friend possible at the court of Heaven in the Son of God, who "ever liveth to make intercession for us."—L. A. Banks.

57. Jesus Shut Out.

I remember hearing some years ago of an incident which occurred near Inverness. A beautiful yacht had been sailing in the Moray Firth. The owners of it—two young men—landed at Inverness, purposing to take a walking tour through the Highlands. But they lost their way, and darkness found them wandering aimlessly about in a very desolate spot. At last, about midnight, they fortunately came upon a little cottage, at the door of which they knocked long and loudly for admittance. But the inmates were all in bed, and curtly the young men were told to go elsewhere, and make no more disturbance there. Luckily, they found shelter in another house some distance away. But next morning the inhospitable people heard a rumour that filled them with chagrin, and gave them a lesson which they would not be likely to soon forget. What do you think it was? Just this: that the two young men who knocked in vain at their door the previous night were Prince George and his brother, the late Duke of Clarence—the most illustrious visitors in the kingdom. You can fancy the shame the people must have felt thus unconsciously to have shown themselves so inhospitable to the noblest persons in all the land. But are we any better? Are we not, indeed, much worse if we shut Jesus Christ, the greatest of all Kings, out of our hearts?—Wm. Jay.

58. The Inevitable Christ.

The story has come down to us from the early centuries that when the storm of persecution broke over the Christian church in Rome, the little company of the believers besought Peter to seek refuge in flight. His sense, both of loyalty and of honor, rose up to protest. But his friends pleaded that their deaths would be only the loss of a few sheep of the fold, his would be the loss of the shepherd. He set out by night along the Appian Way. But as he travelled a vision flashed upon him of a figure clothed in white and a face crowned with thorns. "Quo vadis, domine?" "Whither goest thou, Lord?" Peter cried to Christ. "To Rome, to be crucified instead of Thee."

"Into the night the vision ebbed
like breath,
And Peter turned and rushed on
Rome and death."

That is a parable of the inevitable Christ. Whether we seek him or seek him not, whether we are in the way of our duty or out of it, the vision of Christ shall meet us face to face.—Rev. W. M. Clow.

59. Make Jesus King!

When Queen Victoria had just ascended her throne she went, as is the custom of Royalty, to hear "The Messiah" rendered. She had been instructed as to her conduct by those who knew, and was told that she must not rise when the others stood at the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus. When that magnificent chorus was being sung and the singers were shouting "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," she sat with great difficulty. It seemed as if she would rise in spite of the custom of kings and queens, but finally when they came to that part of the chorus where with a shout they proclaim Him King of kings suddenly the young queen rose and stood with bowed head, as if she would take her own crown from off her head and cast it at His feet. Let us make Him King and every day be loyal to Him. This is the secret of peace.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

60. Yearning Heart of Christ.

In one of his saddest poems—in the series entitled "Men and Women"—Browning tells the story of Andrea del Sarto, who was called the faultless painter of Florence. In his youth he had loved and married a woman of rare and radiant beauty. He rendered to her an almost worshipping homage. He longed to lift her to the high plane of thought and desire and holy ambition on which he moved. But she was a shallow, thin-natured, mean-souled woman. She was the woman who smeared with a careless fling of her skirt the picture he had painted in hours of spiritual ecstasy. She was the woman who craved him for his hard-earned money that she might spend it at the gaming-table with her dissolute companions. Browning sets down the tragedy of their years with his usual unerring insight. It was not that she disappointed him, robbed his hand of its power, dulled his mind, shadowed his heart, and, as he foresaw, would sully his fame. It was this more piteous thing, that he could not disclose himself to her. She was not able to see and to understand him at his highest and noblest. She never discerned the moral majesty of his mind or the spiritual hunger of his heart. The poet sets the sorrow of it all in a sigh, which is the climax of his story. Lover he was, with the lover's secret, but she brought no mind, and the lover's secret she never knew.—Rev. W. M. Clow.

61. Christ Hears and Heeds.

Some time ago, dismasted and waterlogged on the boundless sea, a barque had drifted about, until it was one thousand miles from any land, and all hope of relief had died out from the minds of her starving crew. The cry, "A ship! a ship!" roused the dying energies of the men, and at once shawls and shirts on the ends of oars and boat-hooks were waved as signals of distress. The stranger vessel changed her course and bore down upon the miserable wreck. The wretched sufferers tried with united voices to send a cry of welcome over the waves, and when they recognized their country's flag they rejoiced at the sure prospect of relief. We can not realize what they felt as help drew near, after having for days anticipated an awful death, but still less can we imagine their awful revulsion of feeling, and the howl of despair which rent the air, when the vessel, sailing near enough to see the ghastly wretches in their destitute condition, stayed in its course, tacked about, and sailed away, leaving them to their fate. Nor was this all; the same thing had been done by another vessel previously, which also bore their country's flag and colours. So they endured the tortures of Tantalus, and abandoned themselves to despair. When death had thinned their numbers, and all were laid helpless, suddenly, by God's pity, a Norwegian vessel sailed across their path. Compassion filled the hearts of the foreign sailors, and tender succour was afforded them. Nor was it until the last survivor had been carried on board the ship that they left the wreck to drift away, a derelict coffin, with its unburied dead.—W. J. Townsend.

62. Jesus Only.

I remember, when I was a student, visiting a dying man. He had been in the University with me, but a few years ahead; and at the close of a brilliant career in college, he was appointed to a Professorship of Philosophy in a Colonial University. But, after a very few years, he fell into bad health; and he came home to Scotland to die. It was a summer Sunday afternoon when I called to see him, and it happened that I was able to offer him a drive. His great frame was with difficulty got into the open carriage; but then he lay back comfortably and was able to enjoy the fresh air. Two other friends were with him that day—college companions, who had come out from the city to visit him. On the way back they dropped into the rear, and I was alone beside him, when he began to talk with appreciation of their friendship and kindness. "But," he said, "do you know what they have been doing all day?" I could not guess. "Well, they have been reading to me 'Sartor Resartus,' and, oh! I am awfully tired of it." Then, turning on me his large eyes, he began to repeat: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief"; and then he added, with great earnestness: "There is nothing else of any use to me now."—C. F. Aked.

63. Sure Foundation.

The Spreckels Building on Market Street, San Francisco, is eighteen stories high. It is a tall, slender, tower-like structure, square in form and apparently without sufficient base for a building of such height. When the great earthquake of 1906 occurred and the whole surface of the earth along the line of the "Portola Fault" was in a tremor, it was estimated by scientific men that the swaying of the tall Spreckels Building carried the center of gravity beyond the base line many times during those fearful forty-eight seconds.

But when the building was erected the wise builder "dug deep and laid the foundations" aright. The building has a steel frame and the frame does not rest upon the loose sand which underlies so much of San Francisco—the architect pierced through the loose material at the surface and anchored the steel frame in great wells blasted from the solid rock and afterward filled in around the bases of the steel frame with cement. When the 18th of April came, testing every man's work of what sort it was, the huge weight of the swaying building was held in place because it was founded upon a rock. It gripped that which was abiding. —Rev. Chas. R. Brown, D.D.

64. Cross Our Safety.

There is an affecting passage in Roman history which records the death of Manlius. At night, and on the Capitol, fighting hand to hand, he had repelled the Gauls and saved the city when all seemed lost. Afterward he was accused, but the Capitol towered in sight of the Forum where he was tried, and as he was about to be condemned he stretched out his hands and pointed, weeping, to that arena of his triumph. At this the people burst into tears, and the judges could not pronounce sentence. Again the trial proceeded, but was again defeated; nor could he be convicted till they had removed him to a low spot, from which the Capitol was invisible. What the Capitol was to Manlius the Cross of Christ is to the Christian.—Preacher's Lantern.

65. Model Village.

Little Hettie had a model village, and she never tired of setting it up.

"What kind of a town is that, Hettie?" asked her father.

"Oh, a Christian town," Hettie answered quickly.

"Suppose we make it a heathen town," her father suggested. "What must we take out?"

"The church," said Hettie, taking it to one side.

"Is that all?"

"I suppose so."

"No, indeed," her father said. "The public school must go. Take the public library out also."

"Anything else?" Hettie asked, sadly.

"Isn't that a hospital over there?"

"But, father, don't they have hospitals?"

"Not in heathen countries. It was Christ who taught us to care for the sick and the old."

"Then I must take out the Old Ladies' Home," said Hettie, very soberly.

"Yes, and that Orphans' Home at the other end of the town."

"Why, father," Hettie exclaimed, "then there's not one good thing left! I would not live in such a town for anything."

Does having room for Jesus make so much difference?—A. P. Hodgson.

66. "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood;
He fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His cross I stood.

Oh, never, till my latest breath,
Shall I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt;
It plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had spilt,
And helped to nail Him there.

A second look He gave which said,
"I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid;
I die that thou mayest live."
—Rev. John Newton.

BACKSLIDING.

67. Backslider.

In the west of Scotland when you travel, sometimes when the furnaces are in full blast, furnace after furnace flings its reflection on the sky. You see the molten metal flowing into the mould. As you look from the carriage windows you see dusky figures flitting about, all activity; but when the furnaces are damped down for a strike or for dull trade, what a misery it is to go through these manufacturing districts and behold idleness. The flames have been damped out, the men are not working, but lounging about at street corners; women and bairns, sad at heart; wheels still; hammers ceased hammering. It is the same way, maybe, with your soul. You have damped out the furnace of Christian activity. God knows it. Why, when you were a young man, you had dozens of furnaces in full blast for God. You gave tracts, you spoke to your fellows, you took a class in the Sabbath School, you gave of your money, you prayed and agonized; and all is shut up, and you know it. You're asleep; you do nothing for God now.—John Robertson.

68. Backslider Reclaimed.

Mr. Whitefield had a brother, who had been like him, an earnest Christian; but he had backslidden; he went far from the ways of godliness; and one afternoon, after he had been recovered from his backsliding, he was sitting in a room in a chapel-house. He had heard his brother preach the day before, and his poor conscience had been cut to the very quick. Said Whitefield's brother, when he was at tea: "I am a lost man," and he groaned and cried, and could neither eat nor drink. Said Lady Huntingdon, who sat opposite: "What did you say, Mr. Whitefield?" "Madam," said he, "I said I am a lost man." "I'm glad of it," said she; "I'm glad of it." "Your ladyship, how can you say so? It is cruel to say you are glad that I am a lost man." "I repeat it, sir," said she; "I am heartily glad of it." He looked at her, more and more astonished at her barbarity. "I am glad of it," said she, "because it is written, 'The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.'" With the tears rolling down his cheeks, he said: "What a precious Scripture; and how is it that it comes with such force to me? O! Madam," said he, "Madam, I bless God for that; then he will save me; I trust my soul in his hands; he has forgiven me." He went outside the house, felt ill, fell upon the ground, and expired. —C. H. Spurgeon.

69. Recovering the Lost.

A great picture by Rubens was discovered in an old picture shop in the Gresham Road in London. An expert with a keen eye went to the sale, and amid a heterogeneous lot of rubbish he detected under the grime and soot and dust of years, a masterpiece of Rubens.

Crushing down the quiver that came into his voice, he asked in as calm a tone as he could, of the picture dealer, what he would take for this old bit of canvas. The picture dealer looked at it and said, "I will give it to you for thirty-five shillings." The thirty-five shillings were in the seller's hand in a minute, and the purchaser took it home, got it cleansed and put right, and out from the grime and the dust there shines to-day a two thousand pounds' worth of a picture by Rubens.

God can detect, under the failing and fainting, the grime and the dust of His weakest child's faith, the masterpiece of His Son.

His likeness shines through your experience and the Lord can read the facings of His own uniform. He never makes a mistake and only in this uniform will He save you.—C. Lee Cook.

70. Ex-Christian.

We honor the ex-mayor, ex-congressman, or ex-President as perhaps equal to the present incumbent. But ex-Christian does not strike us favorably, because there is no possibility of the Christian having served out his time. He has not been elected for a year, two years, or four years. The terms of his discipleship are that he be faithful unto death. And even death is not a resignation from his name and office. If he dies a Christian, he will be raised a Christian; he will be a Christian in the day of judgment and will enter Heaven as a Christian. For the whole redeemed family in Heaven, as well as on earth, is named after Christ. Consequently the ex-Christian has not been honorably discharged, but has forsaken the Lord.—J. E. Denton.

71. Spasms of Religion.

A newly converted woman, desirous, as new converts are, "to do something," was detailed by her pastor to invite the backsliders to the protracted meetings. She had been reluctantly admitted into a neighbor's home, where the hostess coldly continued her mopping. Conversation lagged until the visitor remarked:

"I have come to invite you to the revival meetings at the church." Then a change came. Her face softened and the mop rested.

"Revival meetings! Did you say there was going to be revival meetings? Yes, indeed, I'll come. Why, John and I have got religion at revivals every winter for the last ten years!"

The visitor was perplexed. She repeated, "Got religion every winter for the last ten years! I do not believe I understand. What became of your religion in the summer?"

"Laws!" she exclaimed in momentary confusion, "I don't know, but somehow it just petered out."

The church has too long encouraged backsliding by not cultivating habits of holiness and systematic religion. This poor backslider and thousands like her must be brought to see that man has his own part to perform in the working out of his salvation.

Spasms of praying or church-going, of living or giving, can never bring the world to Christ.—Rev. R. S. Cushman.

72. Renewed Day by Day.

One morning Donald observed that the big clock was striking the hour very slowly, and heard his Uncle John remark: "Sounds as if the striking part of it is nearly run down." Donald not only saw him wind it, but did not forget. The following Sunday morning, while his uncle was reading the paper, his wife came in and inquired if he was going to church. He replied very slowly: "Oh, I—I suppose so." Donald eyed him wonderingly as he remarked: "Why, Uncle John, that sounds as if the meeting side of you was nearly run down! Is it?" Aunt Hannah laughed, and Uncle John flushed as he threw the paper aside, saying: "Maybe it is, Donald. But we'll wind it up again and get a little stronger movement. Neither clocks nor people are of much use when the springs that ought to keep them going are neglected."—Forward.

BIBLE.

73. Scriptures Without Comment.

There is a story told concerning John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." Good Thomas Scott, the commentator, wrote notes to it: he thought the "Pilgrim's Progress" a difficult book, and he would make it clear. A pious cottager in his parish had the book, and she was reading it when her minister called. He said to her, "Oh, I see, you are reading Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress.' Do you understand it?" She answered innocently enough, "Oh, yes, sir, I understand Mr. Bunyan very well, and I hope that one day I shall be able to understand your explanations."—H. W. Beecher.

74. Blank Pages of the Bible.

I dare say none of you ever saw a kind of ink used for secret writing. Common ink, you know, leaves a very plain mark on the paper; but this ink of which I am speaking fades away directly it is used, and the paper seems to be blank. But if that sheet of paper is held to the fire, the writing comes out, and can be read easily. Now to a great many people the pages of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament, seem all blank, without any beauty or interest. But if you learn to read God's Word with care and intelligence, above all, if you pray to God to show you the true meaning, the pages which seemed blank before will be full of interest for you.—H. J. Buxton, M.A.

75. Nothing Incredible in the Bible.

An attempt has been made to discredit Daniel on the ground that he made prediction of things that did not come to pass until after he was dead. So predictive prophecy is by many ruled out as incredible.

But what about statements made by scientific investigators? I read in a magazine this month that every cubic inch of gas, at normal temperature and pressure, contains four hundred and forty-three billion billions of molecules. And this result is based—so it was stated—on an actual count, one by one, of a known fraction of the molecules, much as the doorkeeper of a public building counts the visitors that enter.

I tried to get some conception of the magnitude of this number. Assuming that there are one hundred million men and women and children in the United States, I figured that if each one of these would give me $10, I would have a billion. If, instead of this, each one would give me $10,000,000,000, then I would have a billion billions. But if each one were to give me $4,430,000,000,000, I would then have as many dollars as there are molecules in a cubic inch of gas under normal pressure and temperature.

But that is not all, for this same scientific writer said that each one of these molecules is in mass eighteen thousand times greater than that of a single electron, and that the diameter of one molecule is fifty thousand times longer than the diameter of an electron.

If anybody finds it possible to believe such statements, then for him nothing in the Bible should be thought incredible.—Ford C. Ottman.

76. Feeding the Soul.

In one of my early pastorates I asked one of the members of my church how she was getting along in her Christian life. She replied: "Very poorly. My life is a disgrace to me and to the church; it is a disgrace to Jesus Christ. I don't understand why it is." "Do you study your Bible every day?" I asked. "Oh, no, but I study it occasionally, when I have time." A little baby was lying in a baby-carriage near by, and I said: "Suppose you should feed that baby once in two hours to-day and once in six hours to-morrow, then let it go without eating at all for three or four days because you were busy, and then go back and feed it every two hours the next day, and keep up that process; do you think the child would grow?" "No," she said, "I think the child would die under that treatment." And yet that is just the way you are treating your soul.—W. R. Clark.

77. Treasure Unreceived.

A nobleman once gave a celebrated actress a Bible, telling her at the same time that there was a treasure in it. She, thinking he meant religion, laid the Bible aside. She died, and all she had was sold. The person who bought the Bible, on turning over its leaves, found a note for $2,500 in it. Poor creature! had she read the book, she might not only have found the note, but the "pearl of great price."
—Sunday School Chronicle.

78. Knowing the Author.

A young lady once laid down a book which she had just finished with the remark that it was the dullest story she had ever read. In the course of time she became engaged to a young man, and one night she said to him: "I have a book in my library whose author's name, and even initials, are precisely the same as yours. Isn't that a singular coincidence?" "I do not think so," he replied. "Why not, pray?" "For the simple reason that I wrote the book." That night the young lady sat up until two o'clock reading the book again. And this time it seemed the most interesting story she had ever read. The once dull book was now fairly fascinating because she knew and loved the author. So a child of God finds the Bible interesting because he knows and loves the Author. It is his Fatner's message, addressed to him.—Record of Christian Work.

79. Bible Not an Ornament.

Some years ago I had occasion to send a parcel to an honest, hard-working bricklayer, who lived in the country. It contained, besides sundry little presents for his wife and children, a trowel for his own use, made in a superior way, with a mahogany handle; and often did I fancy that I saw him hard at work with the trowel in his hand. Last summer, being in the neighborhood, I called at the cottage of the honest bricklayer, when, to my surprise, I saw the trowel which I had sent him exhibited over the chimney-piece as a curiosity. It had been considered too good to use, and consequently had never been of the slightest use to its owner.—George Mogridge.

80. Omission Means Imperfection.

Bartholdi's statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World" occupies a fine position on Bedloes Island, which commands the approach to New York Harbour. It holds up a torch which is lit at night by an immense electric light. The statue was cast in portions in Paris. The separate pieces were very different, and, taken apart, of uncouth shape. It was only when all was brought together, each in its right place, that the complete design was apparent. Then the omission of any one would have left the work imperfect. In this it is an emblem of Holy Scripture. We do not always see the object of certain portions; nevertheless each has its place, and the whole is a magnificent statue of Christ Jesus, who is the true "Liberty Enlightening the World," casting illuminative rays across the dark, rocky ocean of time, and guiding anxious souls to the desired haven.—G. Jackson.

81. Go by the Directions.

Go by the directions. I saw a picture once that has stuck to my memory for years and years. It was a picture of a dark, wild, stormy night, and a traveller was standing up in the stirrups of his horse at a parting of the way, trying to read the directions on the finger-post. How eagerly he was looking! I can see him yet holding the lighted match carefully in his hand lest the wind should blow it out before he had read the directions. It was a good thing for him that there were directions, and it is a good thing we have them, too. Where are our directions? They are—the Bible. That is God's Word to us, telling us which road to take when we come to the parting of the way. Go by the directions. Do what God says, and you will never go wrong.—J. R. Howatt.

82. The Gospel Plummet.

When I was a boy, in our home in Southern Illinois, I went to the barn-shed one day, took father's tools and some pieces of boards and set to work making a kennel for our dog. I sawed and nailed and in the course of a few hours the work was nearing completion, when my brother, seven years my senior, came in from the field with the team at the noon hour. He reproved me for getting the tools down in the dirt and said they would be broken and lost. He charged me with wasting the lumber and nails and asked what I was trying to make. I told him what it was intended for, and thought it strange he could not see. Soon he returned from feeding the team and said, "Well, that is a pretty thing. It will fall down before night." I was much displeased by his comment, and my feelings were greatly affected. Then he came and picked up the square from the dust and placed it on the corners of the crude structure, and I was made to see how very imperfect the work was. The square would have revealed to me the imperfections had I applied it in the course of construction; this I neglected to do.

How true this is of life! We are inclined to look upon our own deeds and see perfection in them without applying the Plummet of the Gospel to prove their rectitude, forgetting that "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death." Our Elder Brother comes to us in the workshop where we are building for eternity. Do not misjudge Him and think that He comes with the spirit of criticism. It is with love for our best good that, through the agency of man and the Holy Ghost, He swings the Gospel Plummet beside our lives and points out to us wherein they come short of the requirements of God. Will you not then, my brother, seek God, receive new life, and henceforth build according to the requirements of the Bible?—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

83. Old Doctrines Enduring.

At Cudham, in Kent, is an old church. Walking round it on one occasion, I observed a portion of the roof falling to decay and needing to be propped up with a timber stay. On closer investigation, however, I discovered that the decaying portion was none of the old structure, but a modern addition. We need not fear for the ancient fabric of Christian truth. The newfangled doctrines will fall to the ground, while the old Gospel "endureth for ever."—J. Halsey.

84. Only One Way.

Did you ever hear a man say: "I was an outcast, a wretched inebriate, a disgrace to my race, and a nuisance to the world, until I began to study mathematics, and learned the multiplication table, but since that time I have been happy as the day is long. I feel like singing all the time; my soul is full of triumph and peace"? Did you ever hear a man ascribe his salvation from intemperance and sin and vice to the multiplication table or the sciences of mathematics or geology? But thousands will tell you: "I was wretched; I was lost; I broke my poor mother's heart; I was ruined, reckless, helpless, homeless, hopeless, until I heard the words of the Bible!"—Presbyterian Board.

85. Wonderful Book.

This holy book I'd rather own
Than all the gold and gems,
That e'er in monarchs' coffers shone,
Than all their diadems.

Nay, were the seas one chrysolite,
The earth one golden ball,
And diadems all the stars of night,
This book outweighs them all.

Ah, no, the soul ne'er found relief
In glittering hoards of wealth;
Gems dazzle not the eyes of grief,
Gold can not purchase health.

But here a blessed balm appears
To heal the deepest woe,
And those who read this book in tears,
Their tears shall cease to flow.

CHURCH.

86. Advantage of Church Membership.

I would remind you that for climbers of the Alps the only way of safety is to fasten each other together with a rope, and for you, too, a great way of safety is to join yourself to some one else. Ask your companion if he will allow you to draw a little strength from him. He will most likely tell you in his next breath that that is just what he is wanting himself, and you two together will be stronger than if you had been alone. The young man who lives in lonely lodgings and never speaks to any one has a very poor chance of standing temptation. Christianity is a social thing; that is one reason why Christ instituted the Christian Church and the Sacraments, that there might be a bond of union between all of His followers.—Henry Drummond.

87. Value of Church Membership.

Many years ago a merchant in Liverpool became financially involved, through no fault of his own, and had to come to a settlement with his creditors. He gave up everything and went to live in a small house with his wife and children. He came to church regularly twice each Sunday, and with him all his family. As the years passed his business grew and prospered, and in due time he called his creditors together, paid his debts with interest and stepped forth a free man. His creditors made him a valuable presentation of silver in recognition of his splendid fight and his sterling and honourable character. That man told me he could not have held on, or held out in the dark days that fell upon him and his, but for the courage which came to him through the services of the Church, and the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. He trusted in God and he was not confounded.—T. J. Madden.

88. Importance of Church Membership.

An old sea-captain was riding in the cars toward Philadelphia, and a young man sat down beside him. He said, "Young man, where are you going?" "I am going to Philadelphia to live," replied the young man. "Have you letters of introduction?" asked the old captain. "Yes," said the young man, and he pulled some of them out. "Well," said the old sea-captain, "haven't you a church certificate?" "Oh, yes," replied the young man, "I didn't suppose you would want to look at that." "Yes," said the sea-captain, "I want to see that. As soon as you get to Philadelphia, present that to some Christian Church. I am an old sailor, and I have been up and down in the world, and it's my rule, as soon as I get into port, to fasten my ship fore and aft to the wharf, although it may cost a little wharfage, rather than have my ship out in the stream, floating hither and thither with the tide."—T. De Witt Talmage, D.D.

89. Necessity of Church Membership.

During the memorable retreat of the French from Moscow the soldiers froze to death by hundreds. It is said that at night they gathered together such combustible material as they could find and made a fire. Then, gathering around it in circles as closely as possible, they lay down to sleep. In the morning, after a bitter night, those in the outer circles would be found dead—frozen to death. They were too far away from the source of heat. So the Christian's hope of life, of strength, of help in the warfare of life, lies in constant communion with Christ and with those who love Him. To be on the borders of worldliness may be, and often is, fatal.—Saturday Evening Post.

90. Joining the Church.

Thank God for the church! And to-day when I look out on the church I feel a deep sympathy for the old coloured brother down South. When the preacher came around on his first visit to the appointment where the old man lived, after preaching his first sermon, he opened the door of the church. Uncle Ben, who had been a faithful member of the church for forty years, walked up and joined. The next time the preacher opened the door of the church, Uncle Ben joined again. After the service, the preacher went up to the old coloured man and asked him to tell him why he joined every time the doors of the church were opened. The old man replied, "It done dis old nigger so much good the first time he jined the church, that he ain't never los' no chance to jine since." And I feel just that way in my heart.—Sam Jones.

91. Drop Anchor.

An old mariner said that though his vessel remained in port but a day, he always dropped her anchor or tied up at a pier. Deposit your church letter if you would not be driven by the wind and tossed upon uncertain waters. You can always get a "clearing" when you wish to move. The church is an inn for a night's lodging as well as a home for a permanent residence.—Ram's Horn.

92. Gospel Ship.

A man may make his way across the Atlantic in a skiff, for all I know, but if you are intending to cross the sea, take my advice, and secure passage in a first-class steamer, and you will be more likely to get there. So it is with these heathen millions. I do not know but some of them may drift, and we shall find them in the city of God. But I do know that by giving them the Gospel, by building up and supporting among them a Christian Church, we shall greatly multiply their chances of Heaven.—C. H. Fowler.

93. Riding on the Platform.

A writer in the *Messenger* tells the following: "The best illustration that I ever heard, showing the disadvantage of living a Christian life outside of the church, was given me by a young convert whom I had recently received into our church. I expressed my pleasure in the step he had taken, when he replied: 'I had not made up my mind to join when I came to the meeting to-night, but while you were talking, I thought it was just like buying a ticket to Chicago, and then riding on the platform. I thought I might as well go inside.'"
—H. F. Sayles.

94. A Matter of Coupling.

Two travelers, who fancied they were abundantly able to take care of themselves, entered a railway carriage when the train was being made up and found comfortable seats. They had dropped into conversation when the porter looked in and told them to go forward. "What is the matter with this coach?" they asked. "Nothing," he grinned, "only 'tain't coupled on to anything that'll take you anywhere." That is the trouble with many beautiful creeds and theories —they sound well but they do not take you anywhere. The soul that would journey heavenward must make sure of the coupling. This is it: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." —Sunday School Chronicle.

95. True Church.

The famous Church of St. Mark at Venice is singular amongst mediæval churches in two respects. In the first place, the mosaics which cover it, wholly within and largely without, form, as it were, an illustrated Bible which speaks rather to the eye than to the ear; and, secondly, in this Church Christ and the Cross take the place of preeminence, which elsewhere is occupied by Mary and the Saints. "It is the Cross," says Ruskin, "that is first seen, and always, burning in the centre of the temple, and every dome and hollow of its roof has the figure of Christ in the utmost height of it, raised in power or returning in judgment."—R. F. Horton, D.D.

96. Good Advertisements.

A brick manufacturer in America, who is a very substantial man, advertised for a boy. A boy appeared, and he was running over with questions. "How much wages do you pay?" was the first question. "Five dollars a week and board," was the reply. "What kind of board?" said the sharp applicant for a position. "Well," said the corpulent and good-natured manufacturer, "I eat it." "Give me the job," said the boy, with a smiling glance at his prospective employer. Now, this is a humorous story, but it has a point. The brick manufacturer was a good advertisement of the food that he gave his workmen. If you and I should ask someone to become a Christian, would he look at the Gospel's results in our lives, and say, "I want the job."—Christian Herald.

97. Church First.

During the latter part of his life General Jackson was in the habit of coming down to New Orleans to see his old friends and comrades in arms and participate in the celebration of the glorious 8th of January. It happened on one of these visits that the 8th occurred on Sunday. General Plauche called upon the old hero and requested him to accompany the military to the battle-ground on the anniversary of the great day. "I am going to church to-morrow," mildly observed the General. The military preparations for the celebration went on, and on Sunday morning at 10 o'clock General Plauche called at the St. Charles and informed General Jackson that the military and civic processions were ready to accompany him to the scene of his glory. "General Plauche," responded Old Hickory, turning upon him the glance of his kindling eye, "I told you I was going to church to-day." General Plauche withdrew, muttering to himself, "I might have known better." The celebration was postponed till the next day.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

98. Fellow-Helpers.

In the old coaching days, before railways were as common as they are now, I observed a notice about the amount of first, second, and third-class fares upon one of these coaches. As the seats all appeared alike, I took a third-class ticket, expecting to be as well off as those with second or first-class tickets, and beside that, I should have the satisfaction of having saved my money. However, at the foot of a steep hill the driver stopped, and shouted in stentorian tones, "First-class passengers keep your seats; second-class passengers get out and walk; third-class passengers push behind." Let us all be third-class passengers, not sitting at ease looking on while others do the work, nor walking off from it, but pushing behind with all our might, and so helping and encouraging the often overworked and overstrained leaders who are bearing the burden and heat of the day.—F. Clarkson.

99. Co-Laborers.

In the old Welsh legend there is the story of a man who was given a series of what happened to be impossible tasks to perform ere he could reach the desires of his heart. Amongst other things he had to do was to recover every grain of seed sown in a large field, and bring it all in, without one missing, by sunset. He came to an ant-hill, and won all the hearts and enlisted the sympathies of the industrious little people. They spread over the field, and before sundown the seed was all in, except one, and as the sun was setting over the western skies a lame ant hobbled along with that grain also. Some of us have youth and suppleness of limb; some of us are crippled with years or infirmities, and we are at best but little ants, but we can all limp along with some share of the burden which must be carried.—Lloyd George.

100. Strength in Unity.

Take up a thread, untwist it, and you shall find that it is made up of several threads, untwisting which you shall find that they, also, are made up in the same way, and so on, and so on. Fit symbol of the true relationship of each member of any human family, or of the larger family of the Church, or the great Church of Churches, the Church of the living God. The various threads, so weak alone, become strong and mighty when twisted together; and, just as any cord is easiest broken where one or more of the threads are separated, so is it in the Church. Just because of increased strength in unity, in disunity there is increased weakness. If thou canst not take the place of a bigger thread, thou canst very easily take that of a lesser; and of the least the biggest are made.—Sword and Trowel.

101. Possibilities in Christians.

A recent writer says that we are all dwarfs because only a small portion of our brain area is developed. We might become tenfold greater and wiser if we could develop all our resources. It would seem absurd to speak of a jelly fish flying through the air and discerning distant objects on the horizon. And yet the living cells in the jellyfish are like the living cells of the eagle. The eagle, then, is just a highly developed jelly fish. Men often remain jelly fishes when they might become eagles of power.—Rev. E. Y. Mullins, D.D.

102. Trumpet of Gold.

A great Eastern City it was, besieged by fierce enemies, and about to send forth its warriors to sweep away, as with a whirlwind rush, the hosts of the invader. From the camp of the enemy, however, there issued a magician, who by the waving of his wand, conjoined with the sorcerer's arts, turned citizen and warrior alike—all the inhabitants of the town—into stone. Everything in which there was life became as if it were dead. Mailed knights, about to mount their steeds, full clad for battle, stood motionless, with hands upon the pommel of the saddle. The infantry, drawn up in serried ranks, were like so many marble statues. The gathering throngs of men, women, and children stood as if they were groups carved in stone. All were silent, motionless, powerless—the prey of the enemy. Suddenly, along the lifeless street, darted a youth with radiant countenance, bearing aloft a golden trumpet. He stood in the midst of the motionless throngs, citizens and warriors. He lifted the trumpet to his lips, and one long, clear ringing blast sounded out upon the air. Mightier than the arts of the sorcerer, the peal of that trumpet of gold. At the sound, life leapt once more in the cold veins of death. The knight sprang to the saddle. The long lines of infantry moved out through the city gates. Amid the ringing cheers of the populace, the warriors of the city swept upon the invader to utter overthrow and flight.

A picture of this legend is part of the conditions prevalent at this present time in the Church of Christ. The icy coldness of spiritual inactivity is apparent in many of her members. Men who should be good soldiers of Jesus Christ stand like marble statues, struck into utter deadness. There they are, inert, motionless, powerless, the prey and the laughter of the hosts of evil. Oh! for the long, clear call to service, sounded forth upon the Gospel's trumpet of gold, rousing to life, to activity, and to conflict, the millions of inactive Christian men. God of our fathers, and our God, give us the leaders who shall marshal and lead thine hosts to victory, who shall crown in this land and in the world, thy Christ as Lord of all.—Rev. William H. Roberts.

103. Light Your Lamp.

There is a little church on a lonely hill-side where they have neither gas nor lamps, and yet on darkest nights they hold Divine service. Each worshipper, coming a great distance from village or moorland home, brings with him a taper and lights it from the one supplied and carried by the minister of the little church. The building is thronged, and the scene is said to be "most brilliant." Let each one of our lives be but a little taper—lighted from the life of Christ, and carrying His flame—and we shall help to fill this great temple of human need and human sin with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. The life of Christ will be the new sunshine of the world. "Men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed"; universal man shall receive "God's Living Light."—D. Thomas, D.D.

104. Christianity.

"How is it," asked a man of a minister, "that your religion has been going for nearly two thousand years and has not influenced more people than it has done?" For reply the minister asked another question: "How is it that water has been flowing for more than two million years and many people are still dirty?" It is not the fault of Christianity that people go without the remedy for human ills, but the loss is theirs all the same.—Rev. C. L. Drawbridge.

105. Take Heed.

Take heed, O friend, lest the day come when the stars, now fighting their courses for thee, shall fight against thee! In that coming day of sackclothed sun and crimsoned moon and falling stars, one thing shall survive the dissolving heavens and melting elements: It is the blood-bought Church of the living God.—G. D. Boardman.

106. False Reasoning.

In 1872, when I was coming back from Europe, there were a number of ministers on board. A young man who had evidently crossed several times before and knew the captain, stepped up to him, and in a loud tone of voice, intending doubtless to insult some of the ministers, said he was sorry he had taken passage on the boat, as it would be unlucky to travel with so many parsons. The captain was himself a pretty rough fellow, and turning to him he said:

"If you'll show me a town in England where there are five thousand people and not one parson, I'll show you a place a mile nearer hell than ever you've been."

The young man slunk away. I'd like to take all these people who do not believe in these things and put them on an island by themselves. Why, they'd sink the first boat that touched there in their efforts to get on board and get away!—D. L. Moody

107. Without Religion Nothing.

Who would want to live in any city if you took the Christians out of it? Some infidels founded a town in Minnesota a few years ago, in order to have a town in which the name of God or Christ should never be mentioned except in terms of profanity or vulgarity. They hung Jesus Christ in the streets in effigy, and the place was full of blasphemy. I had to stay there all night some years ago in passing through that region, and I trembled for my life while I stayed in the best hotel in the place. The town was destroyed by fire, and they tried to build it up again. Then came an Indian massacre, with an awful retribution of bloodshed, and they tried to build it up again. It was again partially destroyed by fire; and at last, after there had been riot and bloodshed and anything but purity and peace for years, the citizens of that town sent to the American Home Missionary Society and said, "Can you send us a minister of Jesus Christ?" And if you were to go there to-day you would not know that community, with its church spires pointing heavenward, and its children going to Sunday School and learning about Christ. It is almost as orderly there to-day as in any town in the land, because of the influence of the church. Your property would not be worth having if it were not for Christianity in this city.—B. Fay Mills.

108. Imperfect Church.

I teach students for the ministry. Some of them grow impatient in their preparation, and I have often said to them: When God builds a tree, it takes Him about three generations, but when He builds a squash, it takes Him about three weeks. A man can choose which He will be—a tree or a squash. We misjudge children, we misjudge church members, we misjudge the church itself, when we forget that the Christian life is progressively realized, that it comes slowly. I once saw in Pilgrim Hall at Plymouth, Mass., the restored ribs and keel of an old ship that was dug up from the sands of Cape Cod. They were worm-eaten and mouldy. As I gazed upon them I reflected that when the ship was building, hundreds of years ago, these ribs and this keel were in the same position. Then, however, it was a prophecy of a ship that was to be. When I saw it, it was a reminiscence of a ship that had been. The imperfect Christian is a prophecy, not a reminiscence. The imperfect church is a prophecy of the glorious church that is to be, not a reminiscence.—Rev. E. Y. Mullins, D.D.

109. Sluggish Church Members.

During the formation of one of the lines of railway through the Highlands, a man came to the contractor and asked for a job at the works, when the following conversation took place:

"Well, Donald, you've come for work, have you? And what can you do?"

"'Deed, I can do onything."

"Well, there's some spade and barrow work going on; you can begin on that."

"Ach, but I wadna just like to be workin' wi' a spade and a wheelbarrow."

"Oh, would you not? Then yonder's some rock that needs to be broken away. Can you wield a pick?"

"I wass never usin' a pick, whatefer."

"Well, my man, I don't know anything I can give you to do."

So Donald went away crestfallen. But being of an observing turn of mind, he walked along the rails, noting the work of each gang of laborers, until he came to a signal-box, wherein he saw a man seated, who came out now and then, waved a flag, and then resumed his seat. This appeared to Donald to be an occupation entirely after his own heart. He made inquiry of the man, ascertained his hours and his rate of pay, and returned to the contractor, who, when he saw him, good-naturedly asked:

"What, back again, Donald? Have you found out what you can do?"

"'Deed, I have, sir. I would just like to get auchteen shullins a week, and to do that," holding out his arm and gently waving the stick he had in his hand.—Sir A. Geikie.

110. Disagreeable Christians.

I remember hearing an old friend, long ago, speaking (in no uncharitable strain) of a neighbor, say: "I am sure he is a Christian, but he is a rather disagreeable one." He meant, I gathered, that this person took no pains at all to "adorn the doctrine." He worshipped God in Christ; he recognized his own sinfulness and need; he trusted his Saviour for pardon, and strove in His name to lead a pure and honest life. But it never occurred to him—at least it did not seem to do so—that part of his duty to his Lord was to learn at His feet the kindliness, the gentleness, the sympathy, the considerateness, which win and are attractive for Him. Let us see to it that we are not classed, by fair criticism, among the "disagreeable Christians."—H. G. Moule.

111. Dim Religious Light.

When I was a boy and lived on a farm in the North-Western frontier, we used to go to church in an old log schoolhouse in the woods. Evening meetings in those days were always announced to begin "at early candle-light." There were not even oil-lamps in the old schoolhouse. There was an unwritten rule in the neighborhood that each family attending the service should bring at least one candle. The first man who arrived lighted his candle and put it up in one of the candlesticks, or set it on the window-sill, fastened at the base in a little tallow drip, dripping the tallow hot and then steadying the candle in it before it cooled. So every man who came in lighted his candle, and as the congregation grew the light grew. If there was a small congregation, there was what mighı be called "a dim religious light," and if there was a large congregation, the place was illuminated by the light of many candles. Now it should be like that in the spiritual illumination which we give in the world. Every one of us should add our own light to the combined illumination of all other faithful souls.—L. A. Banks.

112. Useless Church Member.

"Yes," said Aunt Sarah, surveying her bandaged wrist, "the doctor says it's a bad sprain; and the minister says I know now how the church feels, in not having the use of all its members. The minister didn't mean that for just a joke, either; he looked at me as if he wanted to see how I'd take it. I had sense enough, too, to feel I deserved to have him say it to me. A word like that comes home pretty straight when one of your own members is useless, and worse.

"I've never thought just what being a member of the church meant before, though I've been one for thirty-five years. I've never felt obliged to do what the church wanted done. I felt it was a favor my doing it at all, and half the time I let some one else do it instead. When I was through with work at home, and with what things I like to do outside, then I was willing to do something in the church—if it was the kind of work that suited me. I guess I've been just about as useful a member to the church as the sprained hand is to me, all stiff and crippled, and refusing to bend more than an inch or two.

"There's lots of things I need to do, but I can't use this member to do them—that's certain. That's the way the minister has felt about me, I guess. I've been a useless member for thirty-five years, that's the long and short of it; and, if the rest of the members had been like me, the church would have been as paralyzed as old Cousin Josiah Jones, who can't move hand or foot. I'm ashamed of myself—I truly am—and things are going to be different from now on"; and Aunt Sarah nodded her head with firm determination, as she looked at the church spire from her window.—Forward.

113. Dropping Behind.

Professor Hugh Black, in "Christ's Service of Love," says: "A young Jewess who is now a Christian asked a lady who had instructed her in the Gospel to read history with her, 'Because,' said she, 'I have been reading the Gospels and I am puzzled. I want to know when Christians began to be so different from Christ.' "—H. F. Sayles.

114. Nominal Christianity.

The inquiry room this time (1882) as before brings its terrible revelation of the vast multitude of unregenerate Church members. I have dealt with several men of position who knew the letter of Scripture as they knew their own names, but had no more idea of free grace and a personal Christ than a Hottentot.—Dr. G. A. Smith.

115. Dead Church.

We read of a vessel discovered a century ago, among the icebergs of the Arctic ocean, with the captain frozen as he was making his last entry in the log-book. The crew were discovered, some in their hammocks and some in the cabin, all frozen to death. The last date in the log-book showed that for thirteen years that vessel had been moving among the ice-bergs, "a drifting sepulchre, manned by a frozen crew." Are there not churches in a like condition? Chilled by formality, worldliness, and sin, they have sailed away from the sunny region of blessing and prosperity, and floated into the icy waters and deadly slumbers of the frigid zone.—Prosser.

116. Dead Church Members.

A minister a short time ago made a very infelicitous mistake at a funeral occasion. The remains of the departed one were lying in the casket before the pulpit, and in the course of his funeral sermon, the minister, leaning over the pulpit with solemn countenance, said: "This corpse has been a member of my church for ten years." He made something of a mistake about that man, but I know he could have said it of a good many members of a good many churches I know and not have made any mistake at all. "I know thy works that thou hast a name to live but art dead."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

117. Poor Samples.

The story is told of a pastor who was urging a boy to become a Christian. "Religion is a continual joy," said he. "Look at your sister Sarah. How much that dear girl enjoys her religion!" "Yes," replied the boy. "Sadie may enjoy her religion, but nobody else in the house does."—Christian Endeavor World.

118. Locked in Glass Cases.

In one of the rooms of the Tursi Palace, now devoted to municipal uses, is preserved under a seal a precious Guarneri violin of Paganini. Kocian, the Bohemian violinist, visiting Genoa, asked to be allowed to play on the instrument. The mayor granted the request and invited members of the aristocracy and several musicians. Kocian played one of Bach's airs and a concerto of Paganini. The audience was greatly impressed. The violin was then replaced in the glass box, where it has rested sixty-five years, and was again sealed in the presence of the spectators. It is rather a pity that this magnificent violin, which was thrilled at the touch of a master's hand, should live upon its past glories and be locked in its glass case, and yet many a so-called child of God is like that, and for the music which might thrill in their lives and the comfort and inspiration which might come from their presence, if the obligation is not met, there will be an accounting at the judgment seat of Christ.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

119. Stationary Position Degrading.

I remember hearing a naturalist describe a species of jelly-fish which, he said, lives fixed to a rock, from which it never stirs. It does not require to go in search of food, because in the decayed tissues of its own organism there grows a kind of seaweed on which it subsists. I thought I had never heard of any creature so comfortable.

But the naturalist who was describing it went on to say that it is one of the very lowest forms of animal life, and the extreme comfort which it enjoys is the very badge of its degraded position.—Selected.

120. Divided Heart.

You know there is what is called "changeable silk," which looks now green and now brown, just as the light chances to strike it. It is neither brown nor green, as a matter of fact, but a commingling and compromise of the two; therefore you can get whichever color you like, according as you present it to the sun. And I am sorry to say that it is so with a good many Christians. You can get a worldly shade or a heavenly shade on their piety, just according to the company they are in.—A. J. Gordon.

121. Two Kinds of Church Members.

A rich nobleman was once showing a friend a great collection of precious stones whose value was almost beyond counting. There were diamonds, and pearls, and rubies, and gems from almost every country, and they had been gathered by their possessor at the greatest labour and expense. "And yet," he remarked, "they yield me no income." His friend replied that he had two stones which had cost him only five pounds each, but which yielded him a very considerable income, and he led him down to the mill and pointed to two toiling grey millstones.—W. Baxendale.

122. Feeble Saints.

It is said that an old colored man, in reading a well-known hymn which contains the line "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense," mistook the word "sense" and gave this odd version: "Judge not the Lord by feeble saints." What a pity that people will judge the Lord that way!—Christian Herald.

123. Why He Fell.

You have heard of the little boy who was asked by his mother why he fell out of bed. "Guess, mamma, it's cause I stay too close to the gettin'-in place." We need to move forward in our Christian life if we want to keep from falling.—H. F. Sayles.

124. Unworthy Manner.

George IV, wishing to take the sacrament, sent for the Bishop of Winchester to administer it. The messenger having loitered on his way, a considerable time elapsed before the Bishop arrived, and some irritation had been manifested by the King. On the arrival of the prelate, his delay was complained of and its cause explained. His Majesty immediately rang his bell, and commanded the attendance of the messenger. On his entering the room he rebuked him sharply, and dismissed him from his service. Then, turning to the Bishop, he said, "Now, my Lord, if you please, we will proceed." The Bishop, with great mildness, but at the same time with firmness, refused to administer the sacrament while any irritation or anger toward a fellow-creature remained in the mind of the King, who, suddenly recollecting himself, said, "My Lord, you are right." He then sent for the offending person, whom he forgave and restored to favor in terms of great kindness and condescension.—Free Methodist.

125. Advisory Members.

An American Negro, who was so singularly lazy as to be quite a problem, got converted in a revival. His associates in the church were extremely anxious to know whether he would now bestir himself and go to work. The Negro attended a meeting and offered a prayer, in which occurred the petition, "Use me, Lord, use me—in an advisory capacity."—British Weekly.

126. Samples.

A short time ago a Salvation Army captain was preaching in Hyde Park, London, when a man in the crowd interrupted him. "We haven't anything agin Jesus of Nazareth," said the interrupter, "but we have something agin you Christians, because you ain't up to sample."—Sunday School Chronicle.

127. Church Without Power.

When Thomas Aquinas visited Rome, and was shown the gorgeousness of the papal palace, the pope, it is said, remarked to him—"Well, Thomas, the church in our day can not say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "No," replied Aquinas, "neither can she say, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.'" Ah! how often has it been the case, that when the church has been increased in riches and worldly wisdom, she has correspondingly decreased in spiritual power and piety.—Rev. C. Perrin.

128. Semblance of Life.

How like a Christian a man may be and yet possess no vital godliness! Walk through the British Museum, and you will see all the orders of animals standing in their various places, and exhibiting themselves with the utmost possible propriety. The rhinoceros demurely retains the position in which he was set at first, the eagle soars not through the window, the wolf howls not at night; every creature, whether bird, beast, or fish, remains in the particular glass case allotted to it; but we all know these are not the creatures, but only the outward semblances of them. So in the Churches of Christ, many professors are not living believers, but stuffed Christians. They possess all the externals of religion, and every outward morality that you could desire; they behave with great propriety, they keep their places, and there is no outward difference between them and the true believers, except upon the vital point, the life which no power on earth can possibly confer. There is this essential distinction, spiritual life is absent.—C. H. Spurgeon.

129. A Lost Opportunity.

The Rev. Huie Kin, a Chinese Christian pastor in New York, was reading a daily paper. Seeing that a distinguished countryman of his was to be in New York over Sunday, he telephoned him at his hotel, inviting him to attend the Sunday service at his church.

The invitation was promptly accepted. After the service was over the guest said to the pastor:

"When I was a boy in China I was acquainted with some Christian people, and I thought highly of Christianity. I had never identified myself with it, but when I was appointed to America I decided I wanted to throw in my lot with Christian people there, and made up my mind that I would accept the first invitation which was given me to attend a Christian service."

There was a pause which was scarcely perceptible, then he continued: "This is the first invitation I have had."

The man who spoke was Wu Ting Fang. This was not his first but his last Sunday in America. Before another Sunday had dawned this man, who had been Minister from China to Christian America, was on his way home.—Woman's Work.

130. Church-Exclusive.

Dr. Dixon says the parable of the shepherd is rendered like this in the conduct of many a church: "A certain man, when he found that some of his sheep were lost, built a handsome shelter on the edge of the wilderness and over the door wrote these words, 'Any lost sheep straying near this wilderness hard by, if he will present his credentials and give good references to the committee in charge, will be admitted to shelter after due deliberation.' "

131. Decaying Church.

Some one tells the story of an artist who was once asked to paint a picture of a decaying church. To the astonishment of many, instead of putting on the canvas an old, tottering ruin, the artist painted a stately edifice of modern grandeur. Through the open portals could be seen the richly carved pulpit, the magnificent organ, and the beautiful stained glass windows. Within the grand entrance was an offering plate of elaborated design for the offerings of fashionable worshipers. But—and here the artist's idea of a decaying church was made known—right above the offering plate there hung a square box bearing the legend, "For Foreign Missions," and right over the slot through which contributions ought to have gone he had painted a large cobweb.—Northern Christian Advocate.

132. Dwarfed Trees.

It may be said that there is really very little true strength and greatness in many Christian lives. But it is our fault if this is the case. A peculiar feature of Japanese horticulture is the production of dwarf trees. In flower-pots they grow veritable simulacra of the giants of the forest. They are no mere plants, but true trees, some of them a century old, yet attaining a height of only two or three feet. All the features of the full-grown tree are there, and they appear just as a forest tree would if looked at through the wrong end of an opera-glass. The gardener takes infinite pains to grow these miniature trees. They are raised from seeds, and when only a few inches high the repressive training begins. Not a day passes but the gardener has something to do with his charge by way of starving and crippling them. In order to hinder their growth, the trees are transplanted to pots which do not contain enough soil to nourish their branches. If any buds appear they are nipped. As the result of this starvation and spoliation the tree puts forth no new buds and remains a dwarf the whole of its life. What a picture of the way in which we treat our nobler life! We are ever starving and limiting it. As it puts forth its buds and blossoms we pluck them. If we only did half as much to foster our best lives as we do to restrict them, we should not be lacking as we are in grand experiences and features, but share the massive grandeur of Lebanon.—W. L. Watkinson.

133. Freezing Christians.

Several years ago a woman, with her little baby, was riding in a stage-coach in western Montana. The weather was bitter cold, and, in spite of all the driver could do to protect her, he saw that the mother was becoming unconscious from the cold. He stopped the coach, took the baby, and wrapping it warmly, put it under the seat, then seized the mother by the arm, and dragging her out upon the ground, drove away, leaving her in the road. As she saw him drive away, she ran after him, crying piteously for her baby. When he felt sure that she was warm, he allowed her to overtake the coach and resume her place by her baby. Can we not imagine her gratitude when she realized that he had saved her life? He had done as God sometimes does, to shake us out of soul-lethargy and moral sleep which would end in death.—H. F. Sayles.

134. Frozen.

A little girl went to church one Sunday morning, but her parents stayed at home because they felt tired. When the little one returned the father asked, "What did our pastor preach upon this morning, dear?" "I don't remember all," said the child, "but I think his text was, 'Many were cold and few were frozen.'"—The King's Business.

135. Not in Use.

I saw the other day a red iron pillar intended for a fire alarm, and on it was a printed card with the words, "Not in Use." That is the sign which ought to be put on many professing Christians.—"Marks of the Master."

136. Evil of Dissensions.

The English ambassador, some years since, prevailed so far with the Turkish emperor as to persuade him to hear some of our English music, from which (as from other liberal sciences) both he and his nation were naturally averse. But it happened that the musicians were so long in tuning their instruments that the great Turk, distasting their tediousness, went away in discontent before the music began. I am afraid that the dissensions betwixt Christian Churches (being so long in reconciling their discords) will breed in pagans such a disrelish of our religion, as they will not be invited to attend thereunto. —T. Fuller, D.D.

137. Dogs and Wolves.

Melancthon mourned in his day the divisions among Christians, and sought to bring them together by the parable of the war between the wolves and the dogs. The wolves were somewhat afraid, for the dogs were many and strong, and therefore they sent out a spy to observe them. On his return the scout said, "It is true the dogs are many, but there are not many mastiffs among them. There are dogs of so many sorts one can hardly count them; and as for the worst of them," said he, "they are little dogs, which bark loudly, but can not bite. However, this did not cheer me so much," continued the wolf, "as this, that as they came marching on, I observed that they were all snapping right and left at one another, and I could see clearly that though they all hate the wolf, yet each dog hates every other dog with all his heart." Is not this still true—that many professed Christians snap right and left at their own brethren, when they had better save their teeth for the wolves?—J. Spencer.

138. Barnacles.

The barnacle belongs to the shellfish family, though it does not begin to compare with the oyster, or the clam, or the muscle, or even the humble periwinkle. There are many varieties of the barnacle; but all alike are mere parasites and suckers. In its embryonic state it is a free living thing floating in the sea; but it soon finds its home on some rock or piece of driftwood; or on the back and sides of a whale; but mostly on the hulls of ships sailing through the sea where the free barnacle is floating. So soon as it touches the hull of a ship or other resting place, it ceases to live a free life and begins its sucker life. So numerous are these parasites that they quickly cover the hulls to that extent that they impede their progress; and unless they were drastically cleared off would in time even sink them. As it is ships have again and again had to be taken out of the water and the barnacles cleared off. It is a parasite pure and simple. Huxley tells us "that it clings to the hull of a ship, head on, and kicks its food into its belly with its legs." This is a partly humorous description, but it has truth in it.

There are not a few professed Christians (church members) who are little better than barnacles. They attach themselves to the Church and draw whatever sustenance they can from it, but only hinder its progress and threaten its very life. They do not maintain free Christian lives and are too mean to die. They say, "Lord, Lord!" but do not do the things which He says. They bury their talents in napkins and then falsely charge the Lord with being a hard master because He expected some return from the talents entrusted to them. They put their hands to the plough and then turn back; they profess to follow Christ but must do something else first. They are trees in the Lord's vineyard but bear no fruit; only take up ground and consume fertilizers. All they want from Christ and the Church is—

—to be carried to the skies
  On flowery beds of ease,
While others fight to win the prize,
  And sail through bloody seas.

What shall we do with these barnacles? Certainly we must do something with them for they are impeding the progress of the Church and threatening its very life. When a ship's bottom becomes foul with them the ship is hauled up and her hull scraped and the barnacles flung into the sea.

1. We must do our best to convert these barnacle professors of religion and church members and convert them into real living Christians. Do you know such an one? Then go for that one. You may save a soul from death and certainly you will greatly help the Church.

2. Clear the Church of barnacles. If we can't turn these barnacles into real Christians, then it is clearly our duty to "scrape" them off the old ship of Zion. "Cut them down as cumberers of the good ground."
—G. F. Pentecost.

139. Blockades Busy Street.

On Forty-second Street in New York City, where the ground had been torn up for repairs on the subway, leaving only the two cartracks free for a space of perhaps twenty feet, a balky horse stopped, with the wagon attached, in such a position as to block all traffic for a quarter of an hour.

If balky people only hindered

themselves, it would not be so bad. They are so often chairmen of committees; or the able men of a church; or gifted women, who will not help because they do not feel just like it. . . . No one respects a balky horse.—Rev. C. B. McAfee, D.D.

140. Curse of Silence.

Two business men on the outskirts of the city lived side by side. One was a church man, and had been for long years, and the other a non-church man. The church man went to church every Sunday morning, and the non-church man went never at all. But they came into the city from its suburbs every week day morning, on the trolley, to perform their tasks in the city, and through the long years they went back and forth on the train together every week day. It came about, in the strange providence of God, that both were sick unto death at the same time. Each lay upon his dying bed the same day, and the non-church man's wife, herself a Christian, was in such an agony about him that she was constrained to say: "Husband, wouldn't you like for a good Christian man to come and talk with you about religion—you are very sick." And he slowly shook his head and said: "Not at all. My neighbor, Mr. So-and-So, is a church man, and in all these long years we have ridden thousands of miles together, and we have talked about every subject upon which men converse, but he has never said a word to me about religion. Why, there could not be anything in it, if a church man, who has been with me hundreds of days and has traveled with me thousands of miles, has never essayed to speak to me one word about religion. If he could pass such a subject by through all these long years, and be silent about it, I will go away just like I am." And so he died. Oh, if we would realize as we ought the peril and the worth of souls! The hour will be gone in two minutes more. Oh, if we would realize as we ought the peril and worth of souls!—George W. Truett, D.D.

141. Seedless Potatoes.

Long ago, when the ancestors of our potatoes were yet snugly ensconced in Peru, ignorant of their coming fame, they were tiny affairs, hardly larger than a walnut, but they produced seed abundantly. Now that cultivation has enlarged their growth to lordly proportions, it has almost succeeded in depriving them of their seeds, so that potato seeds are very difficult to obtain in quantity, and growers must depend upon the familiar cuttings from the tuber itself.

Cultivation has in a similar way produced the seedless cucumber, the seedless or nearly seedless tomato, the seedless mango, the seedless orange, and many other seedless fruits. The process has only to go on long enough and extensively enough and it will revolutionize the processes of nature, check the formation of new varieties, exchange sturdiness for size and flavor for convenience. It is all tending that way.

Let the churches learn a lesson. Hot-house Christianity tends to the elimination of seeds. There is constant danger that a church may become self-satisfied in its succulent prosperity, and lose its power of self-propagation. Our Master holds before us the ideal of seed-growing. The seed is to be abundant—some of it even for the wayside, the stony ground, the thorny ground. Seedless potatoes are well enough, but a seedless church is not well enough. Let us get out from under glass, let us jump the fences, let us go forth into the highways and hedges, and make even the wilderness blossom as the rose!—Amos R. Wells.

142. What Is a Church?

A band of faithful men
Met for God's worship in some humble room,
Or screened from foes by midnight's starlit gloom,
On hillside or lone glen
To hear the counsels of God's Holy Word
Pledged to each other and their common Lord.
These, few as they may be,
Compose a Church, such as in pristine ages
Defied the tyrant's steel, the bigot's rage.
For, when but two or three,
Whate'er the place, in faith's communion meet,
There, with Christ present, is a Church complete.

CONFESSION.

143. Duty of Religious Profession.

At first Oliver Cromwell's Ironsides were dressed anyhow and everyhow; but in the mêlée with the cavaliers, it sometimes happened that an Ironside was struck down by mistake by the sword of one of his own brethren, and so the general said: "You wear red coats, all of you!" What Cromwell said he meant, and they had to go in their red coats, for it is found essential in warfare that men should be known by some kind of regimental. Now, you that are Christ's, do not go about as if you were ashamed of your Master's service. Put on your red coats; I mean, come out as acknowledged Christians.—C. H. Spurgeon.

144. Confess Openly.

A clock may have an excellent machinery, its wheels may revolve with regularity, but it is of no service unless it has a face and hands to profess the hours of the day. Thus it is necessary that the inward life of the believer should be made manifest in his profession. One says he lets his example tell his life. True; but why not your words and public acts as well tell the story of Jesus?—H. O. Rowlands.

145. Convincing Testimony.

Victorinus, a great man at Rome, who had many rich heathen friends and relatives, was converted to the Christian religion. He repaired to a friend of his, also a convert, and told him secretly that he, too, was a Christian. "I will not believe thee to be a Christian," said the other, "until I see thee openly profess it in the church." "What," said Victorinus, "do the church walls make a Christian?" But directly the answer came to his own heart: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." — Augustine's "Confessions."

146. Not Ashamed.

The moment a man is converted, if he would let himself alone, his instincts would lead him to tell his fellows. I know that the moment I came out of that little chapel wherein I found the Saviour, I wanted to pour out my tale of joy. I could have cried with Cennick—

"Now will I tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood,
And say, 'Behold the way to God!'"
—C. H. Spurgeon.

147. Coming as a Sinner.

A great monarch was accustomed on certain set occasions to entertain all the beggars of the city. Around him were placed his courtiers all clothed in rich apparel; the beggars sat at the same table in their rags of poverty. Now it came to pass, that on a certain day, one of the courtiers had spoiled his silken apparel, so that he dare not put it on, and he felt: "I can not go to the king's feast to-day, for my robe is foul." He sat weeping till the thought struck him: "To-morrow when the king holds his feast, some will come as courtiers happily decked in their beautiful array, but others will come and be made quite as welcome who will be dressed in rags. Well, well," said he, "so long as I may see the king's face, and sit at the royal table, I will enter among the beggars." So without mourning because he had lost his silken habit, he put on the rags of a beggar, and he saw the king's face as well as if he had worn his scarlet and fine linen. My soul has done this full many a time, when her evidences of salvation have been dim; and I bid you do the same when you are in like case; if you can not come to Jesus as a saint, come as a sinner; only do come with simple faith to Him, and you shall receive joy and peace.—C. H. Spurgeon.

148. One Testimony Lacking.

It is said that once, when Sir Michael Costa was having a rehearsal, with a vast array of performers and hundreds of voices, as the mighty chorus rang out with thunder of the organ, and roll of drums, and ringing horns, and cymbals clashing, some man who played the piccolo far away up in some corner, said within himself: "In all this din it matters not what I do," and so he ceased to play. Suddenly the great conductor stopped, flung up his hands, and all was still—and then he cried aloud: "Where is the piccolo?" The quick ear missed it, and all was spoiled because it failed to take its part. O my soul, do thy part with all thy might! Little thou mayest be, insignificant and hidden, and yet God seeks thy praise. He listens for it, and all the great music of His universe is made richer and sweeter because thou givest Him thanks. "Bless the Lord, O my soul."—M. G. Pearse.

149. "Just as I Am."

When Morales, the painter, was invited by Philip the Second to court, he came in such a magnificent costume, that the King, in anger, ordered a sum of money to be paid him, and so dismissed him. The next time they met he appeared in a very different dress, poor, old, and hungry, which so touched the heart of the King, that he immediately provided him with a revenue which kept him in comfort for all the future. So when men come to the throne of grace it is not their magnificence but their very want which touches the heart of God.—W. Baxendale.

150. Power of Confession.

In relating his experience during the Peninsular War, Captain Watson says: "I was nominated to sit on a garrison court-martial. A number of officers of different ranks and regiments were present on the occasion, and before the proceedings commenced, some of them indulged in loose and sceptical observations. 'Alas,' thought I, 'here are many not ashamed to speak openly for their Master, and shall I hold my peace and refrain when the honour and cause of Him who has had mercy on me are called in question?' I looked for wisdom and assistance from on high, and I was enabled to speak for a quarter of an hour in a way that astonished my hearers and myself. The Lord was pleased to give what I said a favourable reception, and not another improper word was uttered by them during my stay in that room."—C. Lee Cook.

151. Lacking One Thing.

A young artist had toiled and struggled in his work upon a piece of statuary until at last the block of marble which held his thoughts imprisoned had given way to the statue of an angel so perfect that, if God had breathed upon it, it would have moved its wings and taken its place among the angel choir.

The young artist wished the criticism of those of greater renown than himself, so he sent an invitation to Michael Angelo among others. The young artist had hidden himself behind a screen, and wanted to hear the criticism of his friends without being seen. When Angelo came to look the work over most carefully, he was heard to say to one of his friends standing near: "It lacks one thing."

The poor artist was well-nigh broken-hearted as he heard this criticism. He hurried away from his studio, and refused either to eat or to sleep, and at last one of his friends made his way into Angelo's presence to ask what it was that the statue lacked.

"Man," said Angelo, "it lacks only life. If it had only life, it would have been perfect as God Himself could have made it."

This is the picture of the man who is without Christ. He has many things to commend himself to the world, his disposition may be good, and his character may be beautiful; but, if he lacks eternal life, he lacks everything.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

152. Not Ashamed.

The Rev. George F. Pentecost tells of a timid little girl, who wanted to be prayed for at a religious meeting in the south of London. She wanted to come to Jesus, and said to the Christian man who was conducting the meetings: "Will you pray for me in the meeting, please? But do not mention my name." In the meeting which followed, when every head was bowed and there was perfect silence, the gentleman prayed for the little girl, and he said: "O Lord, there is a little girl who does not want her name known, but Thou dost know her; save her precious soul." There was stillness for a moment, and then away back in that congregation a little girl arose, and a pleading little voice said: "Please, it's me; Jesus, it's me." She did not want to have a doubt. The more she had thought about it the hungrier her heart was for forgiveness. She wanted to be saved, and she was not ashamed to say: "Jesus, it's me."—H. F. Sayles.

153. Proud of Their False Religions.

I do not believe there is any false religion in the world that men are not proud of. The only religion of which I have ever heard, that men were ashamed of, is the religion of Jesus Christ. Some time ago I preached two weeks in Salt Lake City, and I did not find a Mormon that was not proud of his religion. When I came within forty miles of Salt Lake City, the engineer came into the car and wanted to know if I wouldn't like to ride on the engine. I went with him, and in that forty-mile ride he talked Mormonism to me the whole time, and tried to convert me so that I would not preach against the Mormons. I never met an unconverted Chinaman who wasn't proud of being a disciple of Confucius; and I never met a Mohammedan who wasn't proud of the fact that he was a follower of Mohammed; but how many, many times I have found men ashamed of the religion of Jesus Christ, the only religion that gives men the power over their affections and lusts and sins. If there was some back-door by which men could slip into heaven there would be a great many who would want to enter it, but they don't like to make public confession.—D. L. Moody.

154. Difficulty of Confessing Christ.

Dr. McCrie, in his life of the late Sir Andrew Agnew, M.P., says: "We were speaking one day of the difficulty of confessing Christ before the world. It was affecting to hear Sir Andrew acknowledge this difficulty, who had borne Christ's reproach so manfully in all places. He told me, that when he first began to take up the cause of the Sabbath, there were many worldly men who disliked him so much that they seemed anxious to stare him out of their company, and that he had felt this particularly at the New Club. One honourable baronet, not satisfied with this species of annoyance, when he saw that Sir Andrew had courage enough to despise it, and to frequent the club every day notwithstanding began speaking to him, and acting as rudely as he could toward him. One morning Sir Andrew was waiting for his breakfast at the club, when the baronet to whom I allude came in, apparently in great agitation. Sir Andrew, perceiving this, asked him if anything was wrong; to which he replied that his lady had last night had an attack of paralysis, and that she was dangerously ill. Sir Andrew said he felt for him sincerely, and expressed his sympathy warmly. Next morning he met him again with his two sons, who had come to see their mother, and he asked for Lady —— with much interest. The answer was that he had been sitting up with her all night, and that she was no better. Ultimately, however, she did recover; and on one occasion afterward, the baronet referred to came up to Sir Andrew, and with feeling that did him great honour, said: 'Sir Andrew, there are many people who like to laugh at you and abuse you, because of your Sabbath principles, and I confess that I have been among the number, but I trust I shall never so far forget myself again.'"

155. Advantage of Submission.

It is recorded of Edward I, that, being angry with a servant of his in the sport of hawking, he threatened him sharply. The gentleman answered: It was well there was a river between them. Hereat the king, more incensed, spurred his horse into the depth of the river, not without extreme danger of his life, the water being deep and the banks too steep and high for his ascending. Yet, at last recovering land, with his sword drawn, he pursued the servant, who rode as fast from him. But finding himself too ill-horsed to outride the angry king, he reined, lighted, and, on his knees, exposed his neck to the blow of the king's sword. The king no sooner saw this but he put up his sword and would not touch him. A dangerous water could not withhold him from violence; yet his servant's submission did soon pacify him. While man flies stubbornly from God, He that rides upon the wings of the wind posts after him with the sword of vengeance drawn. But when in dust and ashes he humbles himself, and stands to His mercy, the wrath of God is soon appeased. —Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

156. Value of Personal Testimony.

Many years ago, before the Australian gold-fields were opened, a party of experts was sent up the country to explore the district and report on the probability of gold being found there. They made their survey, sent in their report, gave it as their opinion that gold would be found, that there were "auriferous strata," &c.; but somehow or other no one was greatly interested. Nobody disputed their conclusions, and nobody acted on them. But some time after, one market day, some shepherd lads came down to Melbourne from the bush with some lumps of yellow ore in their pockets. "Why," said those to whom they showed it, "that's gold! Where did you get it?" "Oh!" said they, "we got it up country; there's plenty of it up our way." Next morning there was a stampede—everyone that could raise a cart was off to the diggings. Now, my brother, you may not be able to preach, but does your life show that you have got the nuggets?—E. W. Moore.

157. Terms of Admission.

"I really can't see why I need to be baptized," said a young man who had been for a long time hestitating over the question of confessing Christ.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," quoted the preacher.

"Yes, I know," returned the objector triumphantly, "but it doesn't say you can't be saved without it."

"I think you said you were not going to the symphony concert tonight," said the preacher, irrelevantly picking up a hand-bill that lay on the table. "May I ask why you are not going? You are certainly fond of music."

"I can't afford to go," returned the young man, wonderingly. "The admission is two dollars."

"Oh, yes, I know it says, 'Admission two dollars,' on the bills. But I notice one thing, it doesn't say you can't get in without the two dollars," was the significant reply.—Mattie M. Boteler.

CONSCIENCE.

158. Our Consciences Should Be Regulated.

Conscience is like a watch—it may look right, and you may go by it on the assumption that it is right, and find that you have missed your train because it was all wrong, after all. The watch must be set by the sure time, and regulated from time to time as comparison with the chronometer shows it needs.—Maltbie D. Babcock.

159. Good Conscience.

It is a witty parable which one of the fathers hath of a man who had three friends, two whereof he loved entirely, the third but indifferently. This man, being called in question for his life, sought help of his friends. The first would bear him company some part of his way; the second would lend him some money for his journey; and that was all they would or could do for him; but the third, whom he least respected, and from whom he least expected, would go all the way, and abide all the while with him—yea, he would appear with him, and plead for him. This man is every one of us, and our three friends are the flesh and the world and our own consciences. Now, when death shall summon us to judgment, what can our friends after the flesh do for us? They will bring us some part of the way, to the grave, and further they can not. And of all the worldly goods which we possess, what shall we have? What will they afford us? Only a shroud and a coffin, or a tomb at the most. But maintain a good conscience, that will live and die with us, or rather, live when we are dead; and when we rise again, it will appear with us at God's tribunal; and when neither friends nor a full purse can do us any good, then a good conscience will stick close to us.—J. Spencer.

160. Clear Conscience.

A little boy was seen one day lounging around a circus tent. If there is anything in the world tempting to a boy it is a circus, and, knowing this, a gentleman said:

"Come, Johnny, let us go into the circus."

"No," said the boy, "father would not like it."

"But your father need not know it," said the man.

"But I will know it," said the boy, "and when father comes home to-night, I could not look up into his face."

Ah, how important! Able to look into our Father's face! He has been very good to us. No good thing has He withheld from us, and yet so many times we find ourselves unable to look into His face. God help us to live so close to Himself, so pure, and so holy, that all the time we can be able to look into His face.—L. G. Broughton.

161. Good Conscience Independent of Outside Opinion.

In the famous trial of Warren Hastings it was recorded that when he was put on his trial in so magnificent a manner in Westminster Hall, after the counsel for the prosecution, Burke, Sheridan, and others, had delivered their eloquent speeches, he began to think he must be the greatest criminal on the face of the earth; but he related that when he turned to his own conscience the effect of all those grand speeches was as nothing. "I felt," he said, "that I had done my duty, and that they might say what they pleased."—Bishop J. C. Ryle.

162. Obedience to Conscience.

Lord Erskine, when at the Bar, was remarkable for the fearlessness with which he contended against the Bench. In a contest he had with Lord Kenyon he explained the rule and conduct at the Bar in the following terms: "It was," said he, "the first command and counsel of my youth always to do what my conscience told me to be my duty, and leave the consequences to God. I have hitherto followed it, and have no reason to complain that any obedience to it has been even a temporal sacrifice; I have found it, on the contrary, the road to prosperity and wealth, and I shall point it out as such to my children."—W. Baxendale.

163. Conscience Is a Delicate Instrument.

Meissonier, the great artist, had a very delicate hand, and he used to take great care of it, so much so that he had it shampooed every morning, and in driving always wore thick gloves. He was always watchful that he should not impair this marvellous suppleness and dexterity. Well, if a man thinks it necessary to take all that care of his hand that it may retain its sensitiveness and masterliness, how careful you ought to be of that diviner faculty inside by which you discriminate in the great questions of character and conduct. In short, no man commits a sin but the conscience that records it is injured, it has lost some of its discriminateness, some of its sensibility, some of its force. A man never sins but he has injured his will.—W. L. Watkinson.

164. Conscience Like a Clock.

Have you ever heard of the great clock of St. Paul's in London? At mid-day, in the roar of business, when carriages, and carts, and wagons, and omnibuses, go rolling through the streets, how many never hear that great clock strike, unless they live near it. But when the work of the day is over, and the roar of business has passed away—when men are gone to sleep, and silence reigns in London—then at twelve, at one, at two, at three, at four, the sound of that clock may be heard for miles around. Twelve! — One! — Two! — Three! — Four! How that clock is heard by many a sleepless man! That clock is just like the conscience of the impenitent man. While he has health and strength, and goes on in the whirl of business, he will not hear conscience. He drowns and silences its voice by plunging into the world. . . . The time will come when he must retire from the world, and lie down on the sick bed, and look death in the face. And then the clock of conscience, that solemn clock, will sound in his heart, and, if he has not repented, will bring wretchedness and misery to his soul.—Bishop J. C. Ryle.

165. Conscience Unreliable.

Scientists built the great Lick Observatory on the summit of Mt. Hamilton, 4,227 feet above the sea level, far removed from the smoke and fog of the valley and the pounding engines of the city. They went to this expense in order to give the great lens and the delicate mechanism the best possible chance to reveal the truth of the heavens. As a matter of fact this observatory made some notable discoveries, among them the sixth and seventh satellites of Jupiter. If people were only as careful that conscience is not interfered with by the fog and smoke of irreligion and the pounding engines of materialism there would not be so many ridiculous things done in the name of conscience. — William Melville Curry, D.D.

166. Tear Off Your Disguise.

In the days of Cæsar Augustus there lived a great pirate, for whose head a large reward was offered. He said to himself: "I shall surely be caught, now that a hue and cry have been raised against me; Cæsar's warships are scouring the seas, and will hunt me down." He disguised himself, and got into Cæsar's presence, and claimed the reward for the pirate's head. "But where is it?" Cæsar asked. "Here it is," he said, "I am the pirate." He threw himself at Cæsar's feet, implored mercy, and offered to serve in the imperial navy. And he was pardoned. Be like him, except in one point. Do not disguise yourself, but tear off every disguise, and, confessing your sins, make the name of Jesus your only plea. Find out your sin, before it finds you out. Like the Prodigal inform against yourself before God.—J. Wells.

167. Conscience-Hardening.

It is a very terrible thing to let conscience begin to grow hard, for it soon chills into northern iron and steel. It is like the freezing of a pond. The first film of ice is scarcely perceptible; keep the water stirring and you will prevent the frost from hardening it; but once let it film over and remain quiet, the glaze thickens over the surface, and it thickens still, and at last it is so firm that a wagon might be drawn over the solid ice. So with conscience, it films over gradually, until at last it becomes hard and unfeeling, and it is not crushed even with ponderous loads of iniquity.—C. H. Spurgeon.

168. Conscience Deadened.

As the old historian says about the Roman armies that marched through a country burning and destroying every living thing, "they make a solitude, and call it peace," so men do with their consciences. They stifle them, forcibly silence them, somehow or other; and then when there is a dead stillness in the heart, unbroken by no voice of either approbation or blame, but doleful like the unnatural quiet of a deserted city, then they say it is peace.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

169. How God's Voice Is Drowned.

On entering a mill the noise of the machinery stunned and bewildered me. The owner of the mill explained the various processes as we went on, but it was a dumb show to me, I heard nothing. Suppose when I came out I had been asked whether the gentleman spoke to me during my visit and I had replied, "No." Would it have been true? Certainly not. He spoke but I did not hear. His voice was drowned in the surrounding noise. And so it is with thousands of those around us. God speaks to them, but His voice is drowned in the hubbub by which they are surrounded. They are awakened in the morning with the postman's knock, and before they have time for a thought about God or eternity the noise of their own mill is all around them; before the letters are finished the morning papers arrive, and the roar of the world is added to the sound which already existed, and henceforth it is whirl and excitement till evening.—Charles Garrett.

170. Guilty.

The only thing needed to show guilt or innocence is sufficient light:

Aaron Burr once defended a prisoner charged with murder, and as the trial proceeded it became too manifest to him that the guilt of the murder lay between the prisoner and one of the witnesses for the prosecution. He accordingly subjected this witness, to a searching examination; and then, as he addressed the jury in the gathering dusk of evening, he brought into strong relief every fact that bore against this witness, and suddenly seizing two candelabra from the table, he threw a glare of light on the witness's face, and exclaimed: "Behold the murderer, gentlemen!" Alarmed and conscience-stricken, the man reeled as from a blow, turned ghastly white, and left the court. The advocate concluded his speech in a tone of triumph, and the jury acquitted the prisoner.—Croake James.

171. An Accusing Conscience.

Take the story by George Eliot, where she tells of the fatal going astray of a young girl. Earth's saddest sight is that. Let angels veil their faces, and let crape be put on the door of Heaven, when a young girl thus falls into shame. George Eliot tells it in her own inimitable fashion, and then she describes the young girl putting to death the little child to which she had given birth, seeking thus to hide the shame and crime. She slew the little child out there in the hedge, and later she was apprehended and brought to justice and judgment, and kindly women got around the wretched and fallen girl, and sought to counsel and help her. She listened to them—listened as if in a trance—and when they would finish saying to her every kindly and helpful thing they could think to say, she would answer them with the wailing chant: "Yes, yes, I hear all that you say, but will I always hear the cry of the little child that I put to death in the hedge?" What is the great dramatist saying? She is saying that conscience lives, and that men must reckon with conscience. Now, every man needs a refuge from the accusing cry of his own conscience. —George W. Truett, D.D.

172. Conscience Smitten.

The artist Rossetti has a picture in the foreground of which is a modest Oriental house, Jesus sitting in its room, His face just visible through a window. Along the street in which it stands is merrily hurrying that other Mary. I mean the Magdalene. She is arrayed in loosely-flowing garments, and her hair hangs dishevelled about her shoulders. With her is a troop of rollicking and revelling companions. The picture has all the suggestion of complete abandonment. But, just as she is to rush past, the woman's eye meets —what? Through the window the eye of Christ, clear as crystal, and cutting as any knife. It holds her, and tortures her. On her face is graven blank horror and dismay. The harlot is filled with self-loathing and self-contempt. Through Jesus the thoughts of her heart are revealed in their hideous and revolting shape. "She trembles like a guilty thing surprised."—F. Y. Leggatt.

173. A Troubled Conscience.

As the stag which the huntsman has hit flies through bush and brake, over stock and stone, thereby exhausting his strength, but not expelling the deadly bullet from his body, so does experience show that they who have troubled consciences run from place to place, but carry with them wherever they go their dangerous wounds.—Gotthold.

174. Troubled Conscience.

"I sat alone with my conscience
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased.
The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And things that I thought were dead things
Were alive with a terrible might;

The vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face,
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that silently solemn place."
—Peloubert's Notes.

175. Guilty Conscience.

"Thus oft it haps that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;
A fool's wild speech confounds the wise
And proudest princes veil their eyes
Before their meanest slave."
—Walter Scott.

176. Conscience.

"'Good-bye,' I said to my conscience,
'Good-bye for aye and aye.'
And I pushed her hands off harshly,
And I turned my face away,
And conscience, smitten sorely,
Returned not from that day.
But the time came when my spirit
Grew weary of its pace,
And I said, 'Come back,' to my conscience,
'For I long to see thy face.'
But conscience cried, 'I cannot,
Remorse sits in my place.'"
—Paul Lawrence Dunbar.

CONSECRATION.

177. Importance of Consideration.

Nelaton, the great French surgeon, once said that if he had four minutes in which to perform an operation on which a life depended, he would take one minute to consider how best to do it.—Baxendale's Anecdotes.

178. Third Place.

In a boy's college room among the banners and pennants was one that read: I AM WILLING TO BE THIRD. It wasn't until the freshman year was almost ended that his chum spoke about it.

"George," said he, "I have been curious all the year to know the meaning of that motto on the wall over your table. I may not come back next year, tell me what it means."

"My mother gave it to me," answered George. "She said if I would live a helpful life, I must be willing to put God first, others second, and self third."—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

179. Sacrifice the Gate to Heaven.

Pierre Hurlat, they tell us, was the keenest eyed gunner in France and by his thrift he had saved enough money to buy a little cottage in the village of Severs just at the foot of the bridge. It was a thing of beauty all covered over with honeysuckle and Pierre was looking forward to the time when he could spend his last days with his wife in the little cottage which was now all his own. Then came the Franco-Prussian War and Pierre was needed. The Germans were in possession of the village and Pierre was standing by his gun on the heights of Valeria and as General Neil came along, he said: "Pierre, do you see that little cottage at the foot of the bridge?" A cold sweat came over the brave old gunner. "Well," said General Neil, "that cottage is a nest of Germans and I want you to train your gun on it and see what you can do." All of the old skill of the eye and the nerve were there as the brave old man pointed the yawning embrasure of his gun toward the little house. There was a smoke and a roar and the General cried: "Fine aim, Pierre; it's demolished." But as he looked at the old man he saw his face was covered with tears and he said: "Why, Pierre, what's the matter?" "Ah, General," said the old gunner, "it was my own house."

Oh, my friend, to-day bring out your Isaac; come with the best and dearest thing and let God have His way with you and see if the place of sacrifice does not become the very gate of Heaven to your soul.—William E. Biederwolf.

180. "Follow Me."

Epictetus regarded a genuine disciple of the Cynic school of philosophy was one of the noblest of beings. He said to a young student: "If you think that you can be a Cynic by merely wearing an old cloak, and sleeping on a hard bed, using a wallet and staff, and rebuking every one whom you see effeminately dressed, or wearing purple, you don't know what you are about. Get you gone!" Then he follows with a true description of a Cynic, couched in terms so refined and charming that one can not help wishing certain ineffective Christians would embody its elements in their own unfruitful lives. So we can imagine Jesus saying to some prospective disciple who is timidly balancing the expediency of following Him: "If you think you can be a Christian by merely receiving baptism, reciting a confession, absorbing a catechism, attending public worship, paying for the support of a church, and maintaining a decent moral character, you do not suspect what a Christian actually is. Go your way!" Something of this sort was doubtless in His thought when He said to the rich youth: "Go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow Me."—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

181. Complete Consecration.

A Connecticut farmer came to a well-known clergyman, saying that the people in his neighborhood had built a new meeting-house, and that they wanted this clergyman to come and dedicate it. The clergyman, accustomed to participate in dedicatory services where different clergymen took different parts of the service, inquired:

"What part do you want me to take in the dedication?"

The farmer, thinking that this question applied to the part of the building to be included in the dedication, replied:

"Why, the whole thing! Take it all in, from underpinning to steeple."

That man wanted the building to be wholly sanctified as a temple of God, and that all at once. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—H. C. Trumbull.

182. Entire Consecration Necessary.

Suppose you were to buy a house and lot and an elegant residence, pay the money and get the deeds, and the day you were to go in the gentleman said: "Here's the key to eight rooms, I have reserved two rooms." "Didn't I buy the house?" "Yes." "Well, what do you mean?" "I want to keep four tigers in one room, and the other I want to fill with reptiles. I want them to stay here." You say: "Well, my friend, if you mean what you say I would not have your house as a gracious gift. You want me to move my family into a house where one room is full of tigers and the other full of snakes." Many a time we

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turn over our whole hearts to God, and when He comes in we have reserved some rooms for the wild beasts of pride and the hissing serpents of iniquity. Let me tell you, brethren, I won't ask God to come and live in a house that I won't let my family live in. Empty every room in the house, and then the heart is the center of gravity to Jesus Christ, and He will come in and live with you.—Sam. Jones.

183. Complete Consecration Necessary.

The old Greek story says that Achilles, the great hero of the Trojan war, was dipped while he was yet a child in the waters of the Styx by his mother, Thetis, in order to make him invulnerable. And the result of that plunge was that every part of Achilles' body was proof against wounds with the exception of the heel by which his mother held him, and which had not been submerged in the waters. For many years, as a result, Achilles escaped unhurt, but at last the poisoned arrow of the Trojan Paris found the weak spot and inflicted the death wound there. So sin and temptation attack us where we are weakest. They appeal to our inclinations, our passions, our lusts; they find out the weak spot. —J. D. Jones.

184. Lighted Torch.

The Greeks had a foot-race in which speed and endurance were not the only tests. Each man at the start was given a lighted torch, and the laurel wreath was for the one who came in first, "with his torch alight." Success in life is not merely "getting there," but, more important still, in keeping the light of God burning in our hurrying souls.—Christian Endeavor World.

185. Dedication of Self.

At a Christian celebration on the west coast of Africa a few years ago, when converted natives brought of their meager possessions to show their devotion to Christ, a young girl only recently saved from paganism brought a silver coin worth about eighty-five cents, and handed this to the missionary as her gift to the Saviour. The good man was astounded at the size of the offering, and hesitated to accept it, supposing it must have been obtained dishonestly; but when he delicately asked for an explanation of this lavish gift, the convert told him that she had gone to a neighboring planter and bound herself out to him as a slave for the rest of her life for this coin. Thus she brought the whole monetary equivalent of her life and placed it as a single gift at the feet of her Lord. That is the kind of consecration which Jesus expects of those who have sworn eternal fealty to Him. It is not our duty to enslave ourselves to any human master. It is our rare privilege to dedicate ourselves and our substance entirely to our Lord.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

186. Our Dead Level Best.

Some years ago in the Northwestern University, near Chicago, a rescue crew was organized. Their purpose was the rescue of the drowning on the lake. One day the news came that a magnificent vessel was wrecked just off the shore. The young men hurried at once to the scene of the disaster, and plunged into the angry waters to rescue those who were going down. Soon they all returned, but one. Finally he came in bringing one man with him. Immediately he returned, and soon brought another, and then another, and so on until he had rescued ten. During this time his mates had built a fire and were warming themselves, all the time trying to persuade the young hero against his conviction of duty. By the time he had brought the tenth man he was completely exhausted, and had to rest for a while. Regaining sufficient strength, he again plunged into the water and brought another man. Now he was completely overcome. During the night he died from exposure. It was a sad scene. While friends stood around weeping, and his fellow students were regretting that they had not forced him to do as they had, he called one of them to his bedside, and said in a low subdued tone, just before he died:

"Did I do my best?"

Instantly his friend said: "Yes, I should think you did do your best. You saved eleven, but you have lost your life."

"But," said he, "did I do my best, my dead level best?"

"Yes, you did your dead level best."

Then a smile seemed to come over his face as if to say: "Then I am satisfied to die."

Oh, my friends, this will be something of our experience when we are in the presence of God in eternity! "Did I do my best, my dead level best?"—L. G. Broughton.

187. Commit All to Christ.

A lady was leaving home, and was concerned for the safety of a jewel box too precious to be left in an empty house. Asking a friend to undertake the charge, responsible as it was, and receiving a promise that she would do so, she left it with her. But, reflecting that in her absence, she might wish to wear some of her trinkets, the lady took three of them with her. On her return home, her first concern was with the box which contained so many precious things. It was safe. Yes, there it was; and one by one the jewels were examined and found all there. The friend had been faithful; she had kept them all in safety. But of the three which had been taken with her, one had been dropped somewhere on the journey and could not be found. Who was to blame? Was it the fault of the friend who took charge of the box? Nay, she could only keep "that which had been committed" to her. She would, no doubt, have kept this other also, had it been left in her care. That which you have not committed to Christ you can not expect Him to keep.—J. B. Figgis.

188. The Glory of a Stainless Life.

An Arabian princess was once presented by her teacher with an ivory casket, not to be opened till a year had passed. The time, impatiently waited for, came at last, and with trembling haste she unlocked the treasure; and lo! on the satin linings lay a shroud of rust; the form of something beautiful, but the beauty gone. A slip of parchment contained these words: "Dear pupil, learn a lesson in your life. This trinket, when enclosed, had upon it only a spot of rust; by neglect it has become the useless thing you now behold, only a blot on its pure surroundings. So a little stain on your character will, by inattention and neglect, mar a bright and useful life, and in time leave only the dark shadow of what might have been. Place herein a jewel of gold, and after many years you will find it still as sparkling as ever. So with yourself; treasure up only the pure, the good, and you will be an ornament to society, and a source of true pleasure to yourself and your friends."—H. F. Sayles.

189. Bury Your Hammer.

Steep Cliff Bay is now a Christian village. A dramatic incident took place not long ago in the middle of a great native feast in North Raga. The biggest chief of the whole district was present—one of the few then still heathen. He stepped forward, and handing his war-club to the giver of the feast, announced that it was to be chopped up and distributed among the other chiefs as a declaration of peace and good-will. — Florence Coombe.

190. Shifting Responsibility.

H. B. Gibbud once said that he knew of a man who used to sing Miss Havergal's hymn:

"Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee."

In this way:

"Take my wife and let her be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee."
—H. F. Sayles.

191. Rubbish Cleared Away.

Some years ago, my friend, Dr. Handley Moule, visited the excavations in the Forum at Rome. While there, as the rubbish was being cleared away, suddenly there gushed forth the waters of a spring that had been choked for centuries. Poor little spring! Longing to express itself, and flash in the sunlight, but choked by the accumulation of the years! Let us see to it that our lives are as a well of water springing up into everlasting life; if not, let us ask God to clear the rubbish away that the water may flow.—F. B. Meyer.

192. Master Musician.

It is related that once Mendelssohn came to see the great Freiburg organ. At first the old custodian refused him permission to put his fingers upon it, not knowing who he was. Finally he grudgingly allowed him to play a few notes, and soon the most wonderful music was rolling forth from the instrument. The jealous guardian of the organ was spellbound. At length he came up beside the great musician and asked his name. When he was told he stood almost dumb with humiliation and self-condemnation, and then exclaimed with deep abasement: "And I refused you permission to play upon my organ!" How foolish it is to tease the soul about the philosophy of the atonement, to stumble at the proclamation of the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," to say with Peter Cooper, "I don't need any one to die for my sins," to repudiate the theory of a vicarious sacrifice because it does not appeal to reason, while all the time the Master stands ready to transform life, not on the strength of our understanding, but of our obedience. The evidence that Jesus Christ is what John the Baptizer declared Him to be lies in the Divine harmonies which He evokes from natures which are surrendered to His touch.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

193. The Eagle.

The eagle is built for a solitary life. There is no bird so alone; other birds go in flocks—the eagle never, two at most together, and they are mates. Its majesty consists partly in its solitariness. It lives apart because other birds can not live where and as it lives, and follow where it leads. The true child of God must consent to a lonely life apart with God, and often the condition of holiness is separation.—A. T. Pierson.

194. Take Time!

Dr. James Hamilton once related an anecdote which illustrates a vital question in the Christian life. A writer recounts it as follows: "A gallant officer was pursued by an overwhelming force, and his followers were urging him to greater speed, when he discovered that his saddle-girth was becoming loose. He coolly dismounted, repaired the girth by tightening the buckle, and then dashed away. The broken buckle would have left him on the field a prisoner; the wise delay to repair damages sent him on in safety amid the huzzas of his comrades." The Christian who is in such haste to get about his business in the morning that he neglects his Bible and his season of prayer rides with a broken buckle.—C. Lee Cook.

195. Fellowship.

An incident which happened on the battle front shows the courage and sympathy of King Victor Emmanuel III. of Italy. In the midst of shell fire a lieutenant who had fallen, mortally wounded, called a soldier, gave him a few keepsakes to convey to his family, and then ordered him to fly. But the soldier tried to carry the lieutenant to a place of safety. Some gunners called to him through the infernal fire: "Save yourself! Save yourself!" But still he remained. In the distance a motor horn could be heard, and the whisper went around that the King had left the field. The soldier still struggled with the officer's body, but the lieutenant died in his arms. Flinging himself on the corpse, the young fellow exclaimed with tears: "Even the King has gone away!" Then a hand touched his shoulder. He shook himself, rose, and stood at attention. "My dear boy," said the King, "the car has gone, but the King is still with you." And there he remained till the end of the day. —Youth's Companion.

196. Personal Communion with God.

A memorial has recently been placed in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, to Sir John Stainer, who was organist in that temple of worship from 1872 to 1888, and was one of the most renowned English composers. A medallion portrait of the musician in white marble is surmounted by a representation in relief of Isaiah's vision. A figure symbolizing God, the Father, is seated upon a throne, above which broods a dove with outstretched wings, typifying the Holy Spirit. Surrounding the figure on the throne are cherubim. Below is an altar from which a great cloud of incense is rising to Heaven. At its side a prophet is kneeling with extended arms. Underneath, and just above the medallion, is a scroll bearing the words: "I saw the Lord." Nothing could be more admirable as a memorial to one who felt himself divinely inspired for the performance of his work. It fires one's imagination to conceive of such a mind pervaded by a sublime vision of the eternal. The greatest work in the world has always been wrought by men who have been lifted to unwonted heights of thought and feeling by personal communion with God.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

197. Voluntary Sympathy.

One of the secrets of Victor Hugo's power over the French people was their memory of the following: When the disasters of the Franco-German War were falling thickly, and the iron band was closing round Paris, word came that Victor Hugo was coming to the city. He came at the very moment that the investment was complete, with the last train, the last breath of free air. On the way he had seen the Bavarians, seen villages burned with petroleum, and he came to imprison himself in Paris. A memorable ovation was given him by the people, and they never forgot his voluntary sharing of their sufferings.—H. O. Mackey.

198. Joseph Sieg's Sacrifice.

Once Joseph Sieg, engine-driver on the Pennsylvania Railway, saved the lives of six hundred passengers by an act of heroism. When the furnace door was opened by the firemen as the train was going rapidly, the back draught forced the flames out so that the cab of the locomotive caught fire and the engineer and firemen were driven back over the tender into a passenger car, leaving the engine without control. The speed increased, and the volume of flame with it. There was imminent danger that all the cars would take fire. Then the engineer plunged into the flames, climbed back over the red-hot tender, and reversed the engine. When the train came to a standstill he was found in the water-tank, into which he had dropped, with his clothes entirely burned off, his face disfigured, his hands shockingly burned, and his whole body blistered so badly that he was not expected to survive. If love of life or fear of death had held back Joseph Sieg from doing his duty, he might have been alive to-day, and yet dead to all that makes man man.—Samuel Cox.

199. Serving God.

At the very end of the nave of Westminster Abbey there is a monument erected to a young philosopher and clergyman, who in his short space of life, which lasted only twenty-one years, made discoveries in science of a most surprising kind. His name was Jeremiah Horrox. There was one thing which he felt ever had a higher claim upon him even than science. It was to do his duty in the humble sphere in which he found himself; and when he was on the eve of watching the transit of the planet Venus across the sun, and was waiting with the utmost keenness of observation for this phenomenon, he put even all these thoughts aside, and went, on the Sunday on which this sight was to be observed, to perform his humble parish duty in the church where he was pastor. He mentions it in his journal, in words which are now written over his monument: "Called aside to greater things, which ought not to be neglected for the sake of subordinate pursuits." Subordinate, secondary, in one sense, the pursuits could not be, for they were the discovery of the glory of God in the greatest of His works; but subordinate in another sense they were, for they came across, in that instance, the single-minded discharge of the task which he owed to his Divine Master.—Dean Stanley.

200. Kept His Appointment.

When Sir Charles Napier, now Lord Napier, of Magdala walked into his house, there was waiting for him an envelope with a coronet on it. He opened it, and read an invitation to dinner on the morrow, in the town of Bath, to meet a certain renowned personage, whom he was very anxious to meet. He said to himself: "Here is a difficulty. I wonder if I can manage to meet the little lassie and go to dinner also."

He consulted his watch, and found that he could not. Then with a sigh, he said: "Ah, well, I shall be faithful to my engagement: I know what a soldier's duty is." So he took up his pen and wrote: "Sir Charles Napier regrets very much that, owing to a prior engagement, he can not accept his lordship's invitation to dinner."

Sir Charles was there, and I think he slept well that night for he had kept his appointment. Do you know that as really as that appointment was made between the old soldier and the little girl, as really has the appointment been made between your soul and Christ; and He is here?

He knew from all eternity that there would be a covenanting here to-night between the soul and Himself; and I know that He is here whether you turn up or not. Whether you be faithful to the engagement or not, I am as certain as I am of my own conscious existence, that Christ is here, ready and waiting to save. Come away to the Cross; He has long been waiting for you. Come away to the Cross; He died for you. Take care that you do not miss salvation.—John Robertson.

201. Unconscious Service.

Bishop Woodcock of Kentucky has told a touching story about a little heroine whom he knew. She was left motherless at the age of eight. Her father was poor, and there were four children younger than she. She tried to care for them all and for the home. To do it all, she had to be up very early in the morning and to work very late at night. No wonder that at the age of thirteen her strength was all exhausted. As she lay dying a neighbor talked with her. The little face was troubled. "It isn't that I'm afraid to die," she said, "for I am not. But I'm so ashamed." "Ashamed of what?" the neighbor asked in surprise. "Why, it's this way," she explained. "You know how it's been with us since mamma died. I've been so busy, I've never done anything for Jesus, and when I get to Heaven and meet Him, I shall be so ashamed! Oh, what can I tell Him?" With difficulty the neighbor kept back her sobs. Taking the little calloused, work-scarred hands in her own, she answered: "I wouldn't tell Him anything, dear. Just show Him your hands."—Sunday School Times.

202. Pure Among Impure.

A writer tells of going down with a party into a coal mine. On the side of the gangway grew a plant which was perfectly white. The visitors were astonished that there, where the coal-dust was continually flying, this little plant should be so clean. A miner who was with them took a handful of black dust and threw it on the plant, but not a particle of it adhered. There was a wonderful enamel on the plant to which no finest speck could cling. Living there, amid clouds of dust, nothing could stain its snowy whiteness. This is a picture of what every Christian life should be. Unholy influences breathe incessantly about us and upon us. But it is our mission to be pure amid all this vileness, undefiled, unspotted from the world. If God can make a little plant so wondrously that no dust can stain its whiteness, surely He can, by His grace, so transform our hearts and lives that sin shall not cling to us. He who can keep the plant stainless and white as snow amid clouds of dust, can guard us in purity in this world of sin.—Selected.

203. Holding Father's Hand.

Mr. Sankey tells the story of his boy who was with him, when a little fellow, in Scotland, and for the first time he possessed what in that country is known as a top-coat. They were walking out one cold day, and the way was slippery. The little fellow's hands were deep down in his pockets. His father said to him: "My son, you had better let me take your hand," but he said you never could persuade a boy with a new top-coat to take his hands from his pockets. They reached a slippery place and the boy had a hard fall. Then his pride began to depart and he said: "I will take your hand," and he reached up and clasped his father's hand the best he could. When a second slippery place was reached, the clasp was broken and the second fall was harder than the first. Then all his pride was gone, and raising his little hand he said: "You may take it now"; and his father said: "I clasped it round about with my great hand and we continued our walk; and when we reached the slippery places," said he, "the little feet would start to go and I would hold him up." This is a picture for the Christian. I am saved not so much because I have hold of God as because God has hold of me, and He not only gives me shoes with which I may walk and which never wear out, but Christ holds my hand in His and I shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck me out of His hand.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

204. Self-Denial for Others.

A friend told me that he was visiting a lighthouse lately, and said to the keeper: "Are you not afraid to live here? It is a dreadful place to be constantly in." "No," replied the man, "I am not afraid. We never think of ourselves here." "Never think of yourselves! How is that?" The reply was a good one. "We know that we are perfectly safe, and only think of having our lamps burning brightly, and keeping the reflectors clear, so that those in danger may be saved." That is what Christians ought to do. They are safe in a house built on a rock, which can not be moved by the wildest storm, and in a spirit of holy unselfishness they should let their light gleam across the dark waves of sin, that they who are imperilled may be guided into the harbor of eternal safety.—Sword and Trowel.

205. Pam Chick and Partner.

Some years ago a writer of religious fiction told the story of a man named Pam Chick, who was long a drunkard. He was in business, but his business suffered. Then there was a change in his personal appearance and in the appearance of his store. New stock was added; the building was painted. Finally a new sign was put up which read: "Pam Chick and Partner."

Of course there was much curiosity as to the identity of the partner. To all inquiries the reformed man only smiled. At first people thought that any one would be foolish to enter into a partnership like this, but as time passed and the business prospered, they were not so sure. Then they were all the more eager to know who the partner could be. He must be a far-sighted man, they thought, to enter into business relations with Pam Chick. How did he know there would be such a marvellous change in the man? What was the secret of the change?

The curiosity was not satisfied till after the death of Pam Chick. Then it came out that the Partner was the Lord Jesus Christ. To make real the thought that he had entered into partnership with the Lord, when he became a Christian, Pam Chick had painted the sign and had made the effort to tell everything about the business, and indeed about all his life, to the Partner, precisely as he would have done with an ordinary partner, if he had had him.

When the story was told, neighbors and friends were able to see the secret of the transformed life of the former drunkard. His Partner was responsible!—John T. Faris.

206. Example of Life.

When Jesus makes our souls alive, then the one thing we have to do is to try to be like Jesus. A little girl went to a writing-school. When she saw the copy set before her, she said: "I can never write like that." But she took up her pen and put it timidly on the paper. "I can but try," she said. "I'll do the best I can." She wrote half a page. The letters were crooked. She feared to have the teacher look at her book. But when the teacher came, he looked and smiled. "I see you are trying, my little girl," he said kindly, "and that is all I expect." She took courage. Again and again she studied the beautiful copy. She wrote very carefully, but the letters straggled here, were crowded there, and some of them seemed to look every way. She trembled when she heard the step of the teacher. "I'm afraid you'll find fault with me," she said. "I do not find fault with you," said the teacher, "because you are only a beginner. Keep on trying. In this way, you will do better every day, and soon get to be a very good writer." And this is the way we are to try to be like Jesus. But when we read about Jesus, and learn how holy, and good, and perfect He was, we must not be discouraged if we do not become like Him at once. But, if we keep on trying, and ask God to help us, we shall "learn of Him to be meek and lowly in heart"; and we shall become daily more and more like Him.—R. Newton, D.D.

207. "We Shall Be Like Him."

Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, being killed in the battle of Lutzen, left only a daughter, Christina, six years of age. A general assembly, consisting of deputations from the nobles, the clergy, the burghers and the peasants of Sweden, was summoned to meet at Stockholm. Silence being proclaimed, the Chancellor rose. "We desire to know," said he, "whether the people of Sweden will take the daughter of our dead King Gustavus Adolphus to be their Queen."

"Who is this daughter of Gustavus?" asked an old peasant. "We do not know her. Let her be shown to us."

Then Christina was brought into the hall and placed before the old peasant. He took Christina up in his arms and gazed earnestly into her face. He had known the great Gustavus well, and his heart was touched when he saw the likeness which the little girl bore to that heroic monarch. "Yes," cried he, with the tears gushing down his furrowed cheeks; "this is truly the daughter of our Gustavus! Here is her father's brow! Here is his piercing eye! She is his very picture! This child shall be our Queen!"—Nathaniel Hawthorne.

CONVERSION.

208. Conversion Understood.

The word of God is the only source whence we may learn what conversion is and how it can be brought about. An English dictionary should help us to the commonly accepted meaning of any word in every-day use; but if we mean to be correctly informed as to what conversion is in God's employment of that term, we must turn to the usage of the word by those holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Modern reports of work done by various sections of professing Christians may enable us to discover what they severally understand by conversion; but it is to the Scriptures that we must have recourse, if our aim be to obtain well-grounded assurance as to what is God; presentation of conversion, its causes and its real ingredients. Nor need that necessity be deemed unnatural to Protestants, whose motto is: The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.—Alex. Brown.

209. Conditions of Salvation.

One of the passengers on board the *Atlantic,* which was wrecked off Fisher's Island, was Principal J. R. Andrews of New London. He could not swim but he determined to make a desperate effort to save his life. Binding a life-preserver about him, he stood on the edge of the deck waiting his opportunity, and when he saw a wave moving shoreward, he jumped into the rough breakers and was borne safely to land. He was saved by faith. He accepted the conditions of salvation. Forty perished in a scene where he was saved. In one sense he saved himself; in another sense he depended upon God. It was a combination of personal activity and dependence upon God that resulted in his salvation. If he had not used the life-preserver, he would have perished; if he had not cast himself into the sea, he would have perished. So faith in Christ is reliance upon Him for salvation; but it is also our own making of a new start in life and the showing of our trust by action.—Prof. A. H. Strong.

210. George W. Truett's Conversion.

May I take a little leaf out of my own poor life? When I was a young fellow, seeking Jesus, the way was all dark to me. I could not understand how to be saved. Oh, if somebody had sat down beside me when I was a lad, and had told me the simple way to be saved, I think I would have walked in it! I remember one day I was alone, and for hours and hours this was my prayer: "Lord, deepen my feeling. Lord, make my eyes to be fountains of tears. Lord, fill me with remorse and misery and condemnation." I prayed like that, supposing that if I reached a certain point of awful, deplorable remorse and regret and wretchedness of spirit, surely Jesus would then take pity on me. Why, that was not the way for me to come to Jesus. The way for me to come to Jesus was to come to Him and say: "Lord Jesus, here I am, a sinner, and I can not save myself. Thou hast taught it, and surely Thou knowest. I have found out in myself and of myself and by myself how weak and frail I am, how insufficient I am to save myself. Lord Jesus, Thou doest the saving, Thou sayest it, and Thou sayest: 'Come to me without delay, and I will come to you, and I will save you.' Lord, I turn the best I can from every evil way, and I give up to Jesus, that He may save me His way, and I give up right now. Dark or bright, no matter what comes, I will give up to Jesus." Oh, if I had come like that, when an interested boy, I would have found Christ, as I did find Him when my feet were turning into young manhood's morning. I did find Him, when quietly one night, sitting in an audience like this, an earnest preacher pleaded that Christ might be given His own way to save the soul; that the soul, needy and helpless and unable to save itself, would make honest surrender to Christ—utter surrender. I sat back there as you sit back there before me now, and I said: "Lord Jesus, it is all as dark as it can be. I do not see through it. I can not understand it. I am making no progress. I am getting nowhere. I am drifting with the current. Dark or bright, live or die, come what may, I surrender right now to Christ." Right there is the place to be saved, and nowhere else. Right there! Won't you let Him save you His way? Won't you, oh, husband and father; won't you, oh, mother and wife; won't you, young man or woman; won't you, my boy or girl, let Jesus save you His way, by your own consent? Won't you let Him? "Yes, Lord Jesus, I say 'Yes' to your call."—George W. Truett, D.D.

211. Mr. Torrey's Conversion.

Sometimes, ofttimes, God's messenger is home influence. Did you ever hear Mr. Torrey, the far-famed evangelist, tell what an awful unbeliever he was when he was a young man, how he went to the deepest depths of infidelity and scouted everything — the Bible, Christ, God, heaven, hell, immortality—everything like that? And his dear mother yearned after him, and loved him, and pleaded with him, and prayed for him, and after a while he said to his mother: "I am tired of it all, and I am going to leave and not bother you any more, and you will not see me any more. I am tired of it all." She followed him to the door, and followed him to the gate, pleading and praying and loving and weeping, and then at last she said, as her final word: "Son, when you come to the darkest hour of all, and everything seems lost and gone, if you will honestly call on your mother's God, you will get help." He went his way in his darksome and terrible infidelity. Deeper down he went, day in and out, month in and out. And he said the months went by and he was four hundred and twenty-seven miles from his mother's home, in a hotel in a certain town, unable to sleep, wearied with his sins and wearied with life, and he at last rose up in the early morning, and said: "I will get out of this bed, and I will take the gun there from my valise, and I will put it to my temple, and I will end this farce called human life." And as he got out of bed to do that dreadful thing, the last words that his mother had said came back to him: "Son, when your darkest hour of all comes, and everything seems lost, call in sincerity on your mother's God, and you will get help." And Torrey said he fell beside his bed and said: "Oh, God of my mother, if there is such a Being, I want light, and if Thou wilt give it, no matter how, I will follow it." He had light within a few moments, and hastened back home. And, to follow the story just a moment more, he said that when he got back home, thinking he would surprise his mother and come upon her unexpectedly, she came down the walk to the gate, laughing and crying with uncontrollable joy, and said: "Oh, my boy, I know why you are coming back, and I know what you have to tell. You have found the Lord. God has told me so." Oh, the power of a mother's prayer! Oh, the power of a father's prayer, the power of a brother's prayer, a sister's prayer! Oh, the power of a wife's prayer, when she links herself with God! And full many a time God's good angel to bring one back from the darksome and downward way is somebody's prayer, who says: "Lord, spare this soul a little longer. Give this soul a little more respite, a little more time." Prayer, how mighty it is before God when it is sincerely offered!—George W. Truett, D.D.

212. Prof. Bushnell's Conversion.

If a man be a doubter, a skeptic, an atheist, a materialist, an agnostic, who flings all religious beliefs to the winds—if his case be that darksome and that terrible, I come to him to-night to say that he can get light and will get it, if he will just be candid with God. Professor Bushnell got it—that famous teacher in Yale. In the days when he was a most popular teacher there, and also an outstanding disbeliever concerning religion, a young preacher went to Yale, to preach two weeks. For days and days there seemed to be no response to his preaching. The young fellows heard him, but there was no response heavenward, so far as the minister could tell. A little later he had diagnosed the situation. The young men were hiding behind Professor Bushnell, the most popular teacher in Yale, and the minister sought out Professor Bushnell and said: "Professor Bushnell, if these things that I am preaching are true, wouldn't you like to know it? If Christ be praiseworthy, wouldn't you like to know it? If Christ does change men who trust Him, and forgive them, and put a power super-human in their lives, wouldn't you like to know it?" And Bushnell, after a thoughtful pause, said: "Certainly, I would like to know it, if the thing be reliable and praiseworthy." Then said the minister: "You can know it, if you will just be candid." "How?" said Professor Bushnell. "Take Christ's own challenge," said the minister, "and here is that challenge: 'If any man willeth to do the will of God, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God.'" "But," said Bushnell, "I do not know how to start. I do not know that there is any God at all. How could I start?" Said the minister: "Start like this: 'Oh, God, if there be such a Being, give me light on this matter of religion. If Thou hast any interest in my getting light, and if Thou wilt give me light, no matter how it comes, I will follow such light wherever it leads.' Take that clue and you will find God." Professor Bushnell said: "I will take it." Three days afterwards, Bushnell came back and stood on the rostrum of the old chapel and said to his students: "My men, I have a wonderful thing to tell you. I laughed to scorn all that this man preached, and all the rest of them, and the churches. I have found out that I was in the darkness and they were in the light. Oh," said Bushnell to his students, "I have put God to the test, and I know that He is the Saviour, and I am henceforth His disciple and friend forever."—George W. Truett, D.D.

213. Conversion of Gilbert West and Lord Littleton.

Some time ago, two of the world's most prominent skeptics were Gilbert West and Lord Littleton, and they were two of the most brilliant intellects of their own or any age. They made fun of Christianity whenever they met. By and by, they said: "There are two things we must explode, and then we will have the Christian religion all tumbled into the ditch, and nothing will be left." And these were the two things they said they would have to explode: They said they would have to explain away the doctrine that Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day, as the Scriptures teach, and they would have to explain that wonderful man, the Apostle Paul, whose influence was so powerful in the world eighteen centuries even after he died. Gilbert West said: "I will explode the resurrection of Christ and blow it up," and Lord Littleton said: "I will explain Paul." They went their ways, and after weeks and weeks, by appointment they came together again, and Littleton said: "West, what have you to say?" Gilbert West replied: "Oh, Littleton, I have something wonderful to tell you. When I came to explode the doctrine that Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead on the third day, I had to be candid, I had to be sincere, I had to be honest, I had to search for my evidence. You may laugh at me, Littleton, if you will, but when I looked into it honestly, my mind and my deepest soul were convinced that Jesus did rise from the dead, and I prayed to Him, and He saved me, and I am His friend." And then Lord Littleton answered: "Thank God, West! I have something just as wonderful to tell you. When I came to explain that man Paul, and get rid of him, I, too, had to be thorough and candid. I had to search. I had to be true. And you will rejoice with me, West, when I tell you that after I had searched and studied about Paul, by and by I found myself down on my knees, just as Paul got down on his knees on that Damascus road, and my cry was his: 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' And I am a Christian, also, West." And these two outstanding skeptics became two of the world's most noted Christians, and have written two of the noblest apologies of the Christian religion that have ever been penned.—George W. Truett, D.D.

214. Advantages of Early Conversion.

Suppose that Paul had been converted at seventy instead of twenty-five. There would have been no Paul in history. There was a Matthew Henry because he was converted at eleven and not at seventy; a Dr. Watts because he was converted at nine and not at sixty; a Jonathan Edwards because he was converted at eight and not at eighty; a Richard Baxter because he was converted at six and not at sixty. How much more a soul is worth that has a lifetime of opportunity before it than the soul which has nothing! Hence, Christ commanded Peter to feed the lambs before he fed the sheep. Lambs are of more worth than sheep in the realm of souls as well as in the market place.—Rev. J. O. Wilson.

215. Conversion of Wilberforce.

When William Wilberforce was brought to Christ he went with fear and trembling to his friend, the great statesman of the day, William Pitt, to tell him of the change. For two hours his friend endeavoured to convince him that he was becoming visionary, fanatical, if not insane. But the young convert was steadfast and immovable. He had spent his twenty-fifth birthday at the top wave and highest flow of those amusements—the race-course and the ball-room — which had swallowed up a large portion of his youth. He had laughed and sung, and been envied for his gaiety and happiness. But true happiness he had never found till he found Christ. And now he laid his wealth and wit and eloquence and influence at the feet of his Lord, his motto being—"Whatsoever others do, as for me, I will serve the Lord."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

216. Solomon Stoddard's Conversion.

The Rev. Solomon Stoddard, the predecessor of the far-famed President Edwards, was engaged by his people on an emergency. They soon found themselves disappointed, for he gave no indications of a renewed and serious mind. In this difficulty their resource was prayer. They agreed to set apart a day for special fasting and prayer, in reference to their pastor. Many of the persons meeting for this purpose had necessarily to pass the door of the minister. Mr. Stoddard hailed a plain man whom he knew, and addressed him, "What is all this? What is doing to-day?" The reply was, "The people, sir, are all meeting to pray for your conversion." It sank into his heart. He exclaimed to himself, "Then it is time I prayed for myself!" He was not seen that day. He was seeking in solitude what they were asking in company; and, "while they were yet speaking," they were heard and answered. The pastor gave unquestionable evidence of the change; he labored amongst a beloved and devoted people for nearly half a century, and was, for that period, deservedly ranked among the most able and useful of Christian ministers.—T. De Witt Talmadge.

217. Bishop Wilkinson's Conversion.

The doctrine of conversion played so large a part in Bishop Wilkinson's life that it demands a few words, because it is so often misunderstood. Conversion, in its perverted sense, is often used to describe a sort of mental crisis in which, under the influence of hysterical excitement and rhetorical intoxication, the spirit is hypnotized into an experience so abnormal that it often has a permanent effect on character, and has in retrospect the appearance of a Divine interposition. That was not what Wilkinson meant by conversion. He believed, indeed, that it often came suddenly upon the soul, but that it was only a natural step in a chain of circumstances, like the parting of the avalanche from the snowfield. What he meant by it was a realization of truth, of the personal relation with God, so vivid and indubitable that the soul could never be in any doubt as to its redemption and its ultimate destiny. But he believed that this might be a tranquil and reasoned process, though in the case of sin-stained lives he was inclined to feel that the break with the past must often be of the nature of an instantaneous revulsion, a sudden perception of the hideousness of sin, and a dawning of the light of God.—Archbishop A. C. Benson.

218. Jonathan Edwards' Conversion.

Jonathan Edwards was suddenly converted, as by a flash of light, in the moment of reading a single verse of the New Testament, into contact with which he was brought by a series of unusual circumstances. He was at home in his father's house; some ordinary hindrance kept him from going to church one Sunday with the family; a couple of hours in prospect with nothing to do sent him listlessly into the library; the sight of a dull volume with no title on the leather back of it piqued curiosity as to what it could be; he opened it at random and found it to be a Bible; and then his eye caught this verse: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen!" He tells us in his journal that the immediate effect of it was awakening and alarming to his soul; for it brought him a most novel and most extensive thought of the vastness and majesty of the true Sovereign of the universe. Out of this grew the astonishing pain of guilt for having resisted such a Monarch so long, and for having served Him so poorly. And whereas he had hitherto had slight notions of his own wickedness and very little poignancy of acute remorse, now he felt the deepest contrition. Here is a precise reproduction of Isaiah's experience.—C. H. Robinson, D.D.

219. Preacher Converted.

Dr. Chalmers tells us that, when he first began to preach, it was his great end and aim to produce morality, and in order to do so he preached the moral virtues and their excellences. This he did, he says, till most of the people he thought honest turned thieves, and he had scarcely any left that knew much about morality practically. But no sooner did Chalmers begin to understand, as he afterwards did so sweetly, the power of the Cross, and to speak about the atoning blood in the name and strength of the eternal Spirit, than the morality, which could not be developed by preaching moral essays, became the immediate result of simply proclaiming the love of God in Christ Jesus. What we all want is to have less and less of that which comes from ourselves and savours of the creature, and to have more and more of that which comes from our God, who, though we can not see Him, is still in our midst, the mighty to will and to do; for His power is the only power, and His life is the only life by which we can be saved ourselves, and those who hear us.—C. H. Spurgeon.

220. Darkness to Light.

When Horace Bushnell was at Yale college as a tutor, he was sceptical, and his influence on the students was hurtful. He felt this burden of responsibility somewhat himself, and, as he afterwards expressed it to a friend of mine, he said he thought he was "like a great snag in the river that caught the shipping as it came down, and held it fast." He could not bear this responsibility, so one night he sat down in his study to take stock of what he really did believe. He concluded that he knew two things: First, that God was God; and second, that right was right; although he did not believe in the divinity of Christ nor in the inspiration of the Bible. The thought occurred to him, "What is the use of my trying to get further knowledge, so long as I do not cheerfully yield myself to do that which has already been revealed to me?" Moved by this thought, he knelt down and prayed a prayer something like this: "Oh, God!" he said, "I believe there is an ineradicable, eternal distinction between right and wrong, and I hereby give myself up to do the right and to refrain from doing the wrong; and I believe that Thou dost exist, and if Thou canst hear my cry and wilt reveal Thyself unto me I pledge myself that I will do thy will; and I make this pledge fully and freely and forever." And God took him by the hand and lifted him up and led him where he gained a magnificent conception of Jesus Christ, and found salvation for himself and others.—B. Fay Mills.

221. Charles Wesley's Peace Offering.

Although Charles Wesley had been engaged in preaching the gospel with much diligence and earnestness, he did not know what it was to enjoy peace with God until he was in his thirtieth year. Being laid low by an alarming illness, and seeming as if he were going to die, a young Moravian named Peter Bohler, who was undergoing a course of preparation by him to go out as a missionary, asked him, "Do you hope to be saved?" Charles answered, "Yes." "For what reason do you hope it?" "Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God." The Moravian shook his head and said no more. That sad, silent, significant shake of the head shattered all Charles Wesley's false foundation of salvation by endeavours. He was afterwards taught by Peter Bohler the way of the Lord more perfectly, and brought to see that by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ men are justified. And now in his sick-room he was able to write for the first time in his life, "I now find myself at peace with God"; and it was on this occasion he composed that beautiful hymn, "O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise!"—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

222. Luther's Awakening.

Martin Luther was worldly, not after the merchant's fashion but after the scholar's. He gave himself to study, and became a Doctor in Philosophy. He was not without thoughts of God, which haunted him and marred his happiness, but they were not sufficient to turn the current of his life. Among his college friends there was one named Alexis, with whom he was very intimate. One morning a report was spread that Alexis had been assassinated. Luther hurried to the spot, and found the report was true. This sudden loss of his friend affected him deeply, and he asked himself, "What would become of me if I were thus suddenly called away?" Some months afterward he visited the home of his childhood, and on his return to the university he was within a short distance of Erfurt, when he was overtaken by a violent storm. The thunder roared; a thunderbolt sank into the ground at his side. Luther threw himself on his knees; his hour, he thought, was perhaps come; death, judgment, eternity, were before him in all their terrors, and spoke with a voice he could no longer resist; encompassed with the anguish and terror of death, as he himself relates, he made a vow, if God would deliver him from this danger, to forsake the world, and devote himself entirely to His service. Risen from the earth, having still before his eyes that death which must one day overtake him, he could be worldly no longer, he must now be godly. His whole soul went into the resolution, "I will arise"; and arise he did with singleness and earnestness of purpose, nor lingered for one moment until he found himself sheltered in peace under the roof of his heavenly Father.—J. Kennedy.

223. Neander's Conversion.

A young Jewish lad named David Mendel, who used to astonish a book-seller in Hamburg by losing himself for hours in volumes so learned that no one else would touch them, was attracted to certain works on Christianity, and read them with glowing interest. He was impressed with the claims which Jesus makes upon humanity, and finally became convinced that He who taught such ethics, and required of His adherents such a life, must be more than a man. For a long time he wavered between fidelity to the teachings of his parents and loyalty to the new conceptions which had entered his soul. At length he could hold his false position no longer, and publicly renounced Judaism and was baptized. To commemorate the change which had occurred in his life he adopted the name Neander, signifying a new man. Such, by a slow but steady process from the first awakening of his mind to the final surrender of his will, was the conversion of the man who has been called the father of modern Church History.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

224. Judson's Conversion.

Adoniram Judson, the illustrious American missionary, was a minister's son. He was very able and very ambitious. He was early sent to college.

In the class above was a young man of the name of E., brilliant, witty and popular, but a determined deist. Between him and the minister's son there sprung up a close intimacy, which ended in the latter's gradually renouncing all his early beliefs, and becoming as great a sceptic as his friend. He was only twenty years of age, and you may be sure it was a terrible distress and consternation that filled the home circle when during the recess he announced that he was no longer a believer in Christianity. More than a match for his father's arguments, he steeled himself against all softer influences, and, with his mind made up to see and enjoy the world, he first joined a company of players at New York, and then set out on a solitary tour.

One night he stopped at a country inn. Lighting him to his room, the landlord mentioned that he had been obliged to place him next door to a young man who was exceedingly ill, in all probability dying, but he hoped that it would occasion him no uneasiness. Judson assured him that, beyond pity for the poor sick man, he should have no feeling whatever. Still, the night proved a restless one. Sounds came from the sick-chamber — sometimes the movements of the watchers; sometimes the groans of the sufferer; and the young traveler could not sleep.

"So close at hand, with but a thin partition between us," he thought, "there is an immortal spirit about to pass into eternity; and is he prepared?" And then he thought: "For shame of my shallow philosophy! What would E., so clear-headed and intellectual, think of this boyish weakness?" Then he tried to sleep, but still the picture of the dying man rose in his imagination. He was a young man, and the young student felt compelled to place himself on his neighbor's dying bed, and he could not help fancying what would be his thoughts in such circumstances.

But the morning dawned, and in the welcome daylight his "superstitious illusions fled away." When he came downstairs, he inquired of the landlord how his fellow lodger had passed the night.

"He is dead," was the answer.

"Dead!"

"Yes; he is gone, poor fellow; the doctor said he would not probably survive the night."

"Do you know who he was?"

"O, yes; he was a young man from Providence College, a very fine fellow; his name was E."

Judson was completely stunned. Hours passed before he could quit the house; but, when he did resume his journey, the words, "Dead! Lost! Lost!" were continually ringing in his ears. There was no need for argument. God had spoken, and from the presence of the living God the chimeras of unbelief and the pleasures of sin alike fled away. The religion of the Bible he knew to be true; and, turning his horse's head toward Plymouth, he rode slowly homeward, his plans of enjoyment all shattered, and ready to commence that rough and uninviting path which, through the death-prison at Ava and its rehearsal of martyrdom, conducted to the grave at Maulmain.—James Hamilton.

225. Penitent's First Effort.

In every building the first stone must be laid and the first blow must be struck. The ark was 120 years in building; yet there was a day when Noah laid his axe at the first tree he cut down to form it. The temple of Solomon was a glorious building; but there was a day when the first huge stone was laid at the foot of Mount Moriah. When does the building of the Spirit really begin to appear in a man's heart? It begins, so far as we can judge, when he first pours out his heart to God in prayer.—Bishop J. C. Ryle.

226. Gradual Conversion.

Suppose it now midnight, and the sun with the antipodes: he doth not presently mount up to the height of our heaven, and make it noon-day; but first it is twilight, then the day dawns, and the sun rises, and yet looks with weaker eyes before he shines out in his full glory. We do not sweat with summer to-day, and be shaken with the fury of the winter to-morrow; but it comes on with soft paces. Now, it is most true that Christ is able, in a moment, of sinners on earth to make saints in heaven, as He wrought upon the dying malefactor. Some may make sudden leaps, and of furious sinners become zealous professors in a trice. Of such we may be charitably jealous; holiness shoots not up, like Jonah's gourd, in a night. God is the God of order, not of confusion; and nature is not suffered to run out of one extreme into another but by a medium. That ordinary way whereby men walk from the state of sin to the state of glory is the state of grace. So our conversion is by soft and scarcely sensible beginnings, albeit no part after part, degree by degree in every part, by gentle soakings in of goodness in every degree, by growing up to maturity and ripeness.—T. Adams.

227. Conversions—Cataclysmic.

"What are you going to do with that mountain?" I asked. "Blow it up," he replied, as though a well-developed mountain was of no more importance than a pebble in his path.

That graphically tells the story of just how the new transcontinental is being built. And the blowing up of mountains in these days of powder and dynamite is not a myth. In the mountain and wilderness regions, "coyote holes" are being fired every day, and one can sometimes hear the explosion thirty miles away. I was present at one of these events. Four thousand yards of rock stood in the path of the transcontinental. A curve would have taken one around the base of it. But "orders are orders," and the "coyote" was dug. A soft seam was found in the mountain of rock, and the tedious task of drilling in to its heart was begun. When completed, the "coyote" was a tunnel about four feet square running back into the rock for fifty feet, where it terminated in a chamber. It took half a hundred men to carry in the explosives. One hundred and twenty-five barrels of powder were dumped into sacks, and the sacks packed in the chamber, and with these three cases of dynamite of fifty pounds each. Electric wires and fuse were then connected with the mine, and after that the face of the tunnel was rammed solid with rock and earth. When the time came for the terrific explosion, there was not a soul within half a mile of the mountain.

And then a lightning flash passed along the wire. One minute—two—three—five passed, while in the bowels of the mountain the fuse was sizzling to its end. There was a rumbling and a jarring, as if the earth were convulsed under our feet; volumes of dense black smoke shot upward, shutting the mountain in, in an impenetrable pall of gloom; and in an instant these rolling, twisting volumes of black became lurid, and then it was as if all the guns of all the navies in the world had exploded close to our ears. And, when it was all over, the granite monster that had stood there for unnumbered centuries had, as the engineer rather poetically expressed it, "made way for the new transcontinental."—James Oliver Curwell.

228. Conversion — A Complete Surrender.

When Henry VIII had determined to make himself the head of the English Church, he insisted upon it that convocation should accept his headship without limiting and modifying clauses. He refused to entertain any compromises, and vowed that "he would have no tantums," as he called them. Thus when a sinner parleys with his Saviour he would fain have a little of the honor of his salvation, he would save alive some favorite sin, he would fain amend the humbling terms of grace—but there is no help for it, Jesus will be all in all, and the sinner must be nothing at all. The surrender must be complete, there must be no tantums, but the heart without reserve must submit to the sovereignty of the Redeemer.—C. H. Spurgeon.

229. Coming to Himself.

History tells us that during the reign of Queen Elizabeth the Spaniards once unjustly imprisoned some English subjects. No reasoning or expostulation could induce the Spanish authorities to release them; when our Queen, finding all other means had failed, lost all patience, and sent a peremptory message declaring that if the imprisoned English were not immediately liberated her fleets and armies should know the reason why. The threat accomplished more than all the previous remonstrances, for at the mention of "fleets and armies" the captives were immediately released. It is often found that one stroke of the rod will bring men to their senses sooner than all the reasoning which can be urged. They can afford to be stubborn and perverse so long as their persons are secure; but the first smart of a reversed fortune will make them yield to all your arguments. So it was with the prodigal. By the swine troughs he came to himself. —W. G. Pascoe.

230. Conviction Not Conversion.

When Brother Corning was buried I saw hard-faced men cry. And I know what we should hear such men say if we could listen to their conversation as they walk away on such occasions. "Dear Brother," says one, "we have been working for money; but that is not the main thing. It is only a little while that it can do us any good." "That is true," says another. "We must die soon. It will not be long before there will be such a funeral for us. And are we ready?" And so these two men, grey-haired, it may be, very simple and very much in earnest, give expression to their feelings as they go down to Fulton Ferry. And as they cross over they say to themselves, "I will think of these things and try to carry the impression of them with me." But when they go up the street on the other side they meet this man and that man, and their minds are distracted from these serious thoughts; and when they get back into their counting-rooms they forget all about them. They did think they would tell their wives all about it when they got home at night; but when, at the supper-table, they were asked, "Husband, did you go to the funeral to-day?" they said, "Yes." "Was it a good funeral?" "Very, very." That was all they had to say about it! And yet they had had a revelation. They had come to themselves, though it was but for an hour.—H. W. Beecher.

231. On the Road to Heaven.

The following curious dream was related to me by the woman who had the strange experience. She dreamed that she entered a large room where many people were on their knees in prayer. An old man with flowing beard was walking about; a man like one of the old prophets. She asked him where she was, to which he replied, "What, do you live in Bristol, and not know where you are?" "No," she answered. Then he told her that the kneeling people were inquiring how far they were from Heaven. She said that she too would like to know. "Follow me," said the old man, and he led her towards an instrument like a telephone with a serpent-like pipe attached. He worked the apparatus and inquired, while the woman stood trembling for the answer. The reply came, "You are not on the road at all." Very sorrowful and shedding bitter tears she turned to leave the room. Just as she reached the door a voice, kind but firm, commanded her to stop. It was the old man's voice. When she turned round he said, "You're all right now." "How?" she asked. "I thought you told me I was not on the road at all." "Yes," he replied, "I did, but you are on the road now. You have just turned the corner and got on the right way. Those tears of yours are the tears of repentance, and now you are all right."—William Forbes.

232. Right About Face.

A young soldier, who had led a careless life, but had become afterwards a Christian, described very well the change that had been wrought in him when he said—"Jesus Christ said to me, Right about face! And I heard and obeyed Him in my heart." That is exactly what we call "conversion." It is a turning-about of the face—from the world to God. But with the face it is a turning also of the heart.—C. A. Salmond.

233. Conversion and Conservation.

You, perhaps, remember what Savonarola did in Florence at Carnival time. Amongst the so-called delights of Carnival time was a day when the children of Florence seem to have had free leave to throw stones. It was a stupid custom, it was a dangerous custom, it was a wicked custom, and it was one of the customs Savonarola resolved to stop. But it was not a ruthless policy of repression that the reformer adopted. He knew that the delight of stone-throwing consisted in the vent it gave for boyish energy. So Savonarola resolved the boys should have plenty of scope for their energies, but he resolved that their energies should be turned into a useful channel. Instead of employing themselves in flinging stones to the danger of life and limb, Savonarola drilled these children, and sent them through the streets of Florence singing "Jesus Christ is King," and collecting alms for the poor. Their boyish energy was not repressed—it was simply converted to right uses.

And that is exactly how Jesus Christ acts with men. Scientists talk about the "Conservation of Energy." Energy, they say, may change its form and may change its direction, but no energy is ever lost. There is a "conservation of energy," too, in the realms of religion. Christ never destroys any human force or energy. He simply changes its direction. He conserves but converts it.—J. D. Jones.

234. Land of Beginning Again.

I wish that there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
And all of our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door,
And never put on again.

We should find all the things we intended to do
But forgot and remembered—too late,
Little praises unspoken, little promises broken,
And all of the thousand and one
Little duties neglected that might have perfected
The day for one less fortunate.

It wouldn't be possible not to be kind
In the Land of Beginning Again;
And the ones we misjudged, and the ones whom we grudged
Their moments of victory here
Would find in the grasp of our loving handclasp
More than penitent lips could explain.

So I wish that there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
And all of our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door,
And never put on again.
—Louise Fletcher Tarkington.

235. Conversion.

You ask me how I gave my heart to Christ?
I do not know.
There came a yearning for Him in my soul
So long ago.
I found earth's flowers would fade and die—
I wept for something that could satisfy;

And then—and then—somehow I seemed to dare
To lift my broken heart to Him in prayer.
I do not know—I can not tell you how;
I only know He is my Saviour now.

You ask me when I gave my heart to Christ?
I cannot tell.
The day, or just the hour, I do not now
Remember well.
It must have been when I was all alone
The light of His forgiving Spirit shone
Into my heart, so clouded o'er with sin;
I think 'twas then I trembling let Him in.
I do not know—I cannot tell you when;
I only know He is so dear, since then.

You ask me where I gave my heart to Christ?
I cannot say.
That sacred place has faded from my sight
As yesterday.
Perhaps He thought it better I should not
Remember where. How I should love that spot!
I think I could not tear myself away,
For I should wish forever there to stay.
I do not know—I cannot tell you where;
I only know He came and blessed me there.

You ask me why I gave my heart to Christ?
I can reply;
It is a wondrous story; listen, while
I tell you why.
My heart was drawn, at length, to seek His face;
I was alone, I had no resting-place;
I heard of Him how He had loved me, with a love
Of depth so great, of height so far above,
All human ken; I longed such love to share,
And sought it then, upon my knees in prayer.

You ask me why I thought this loving Christ
Would heed my prayer?
I knew He died upon the cross for me—
I nailed Him there.
I heard His dying cry: "Father forgive!"
I saw Him drink death's cup that I might live;
My head was bowed upon my breast in shame!
He called me—and in penitence I came.
He heard my prayer! I cannot tell you how,
Nor when, nor where; only—I love Him now.

DEATH.

236. Dead on the Field of Honor.

During the campaigns of Napoleon it was most necessary that a certain pass should be kept and the Austrians held in check for twenty-four hours. A battery commanded the entrance to the pass; one by one the men behind the guns in the battery fell, but still the fiery fusillade continued, and the pass was held for twenty-four hours. At length a signal appeared about the battery, which said, "We will now surrender if you will permit us to go forth with our guns." The firing ceased, and the garrison marched forth—it consisted of one man, a brave grenadier. The Austrians expressed great surprise that one man had so long held the pass alone. For hours he had himself manned those guns. When Napoleon heard it he sent for the brave grenadier and offered him any promotion he wished. His reply was: "Sire, I want to remain a simple grenadier and your faithful servant."

A few weeks later in another engagement the faithful soldier was mortally wounded and shortly died. Napoleon gave the order that the name of the faithful grenadier should never be removed from the muster roll, and that, when the name of D'Auverque was called, some one from the ranks should step out and respond, "Dead on the field of honor!" Faithful unto life, faithful unto death! "Enter thou into the joy of the Lord!"—Rev. Phil. Baird, D.D.

237. His Own Funeral March.

When Napoleon flung his troops across the Alps, when they were climbing their way over the snowy peaks to the sun-lit plains of Italy, a most pathetic incident took place. A little drummer-boy was caught by a sliding avalanche on the mountain, and shot into the crevasse. Unhurt, he found himself on the ledge. Far above him was the winding host going zigzag up the mountain. The soldiers who had witnessed the accident looked back, but they dared not turn aside; it was "Onward!"

The little lad commenced to play on his drum the relief call, and they heard him. Many a father in that French army, I think, wished there would come orders to relieve the lad; and then as they wound out of sight and again came into view they heard the appeal on the drum.

Napoleon was told what had happened, but what was a little drummer-boy to him? What was a little drummer-boy to the great host that he was leading over the Alps, and he would not give the order to save the lad. "March on!"

The lad noticed the forms of his comrades getting fainter and fainter, and when he saw that there was to be no rescue, that he had to lie down and die, they heard him stop the relief call on his drum. A few minutes he waited, and then they heard him beating his own funeral march. The veterans in that army wept. They wept, and as they told of it by the camp-fires years after, they wept again. The lad beat his own funeral march; he had to lie down and die. There was no rescue, no hope, nothing but despair and death.

Aye, but that is not the story of the Cross. There is a funeral march being played from the judgment hall, and on the cross outside the city; and when I tell you that Jesus Christ died, the real Son of God, the substitute for us, there is life as a result of the funeral march. There is joy and there is gladness come from the death of Christ.—John Robertson.

238. Influence After Death.

It is related of a broker in one of the Italian cities that his strict economy brought on him the reputation of miserliness. He lived plainly and poorly, and at his death a hundred thousand men in the city were ready to curse him until his will was opened, in which he declared that early his heart was touched with the sufferings of the poor in the city for lack of water. Springs there were none, and the public wells were bad; and he had spent his life in accumulating a fortune that should be devoted to bringing, by an aqueduct, from the neighboring mountains, streams that should pour abundantly into the baths and dwellings of the poor of the city; and he not only denied himself of many of the comforts of life, but toiled by day and by night, yea, and bore obloquy, that he might bless his fellow-citizens. He is dead; but those streams pour their health yet into the city.—H. W. Beecher.

239. Good Guides.

As the British had to be led by starlight around a dangerous circle, Lord Wolseley chose a young naval officer to do it. He piloted them successfully; and when the enemy's fire opened young Rawson was the first to fall. When the shout of victory went up he was dying. Lord Wolseley galloped over the plain to speak with him before he died. As he entered the tent where the young hero lay, a smile lit up the pale face of the dying man, and with a last effort of his fading strength he said: "General, didn't I lead them straight?" That story got me. I want to be able to put that question to my Maker with some hope of receiving an affirmative reply. Let's pledge that by God's help we will.—Ernest L. Waldorf.

240. Glorified Memory.

Years ago when I was leaving my Liverpool home to fulfill an engagement in the city of Glasgow, the last sight on which my eyes rested was that of my little daughter at the window in her grandmother's arms. As the carriage drove me away, she waved her hand in fond and laughing glee, and many a time during my railway ride the pleasant vision came up before my memory, and filled my heart with joy. I never saw her again! The next morning a telegram stunned me with the tidings of her death; and now that earthly glimpse of her has been idealized and glorified, and it seems to me as if God had set her in the window of Heaven to beckon me upward to my eternal home. I would not give that memory for all the gold on earth. I would not part with the inspiration that it stirs within me for all that the world could bestow.—Dr. W. M. Taylor.

241. Chill of Spiritual Death.

If you are an unconverted man, if you are a soul that Jesus has not yet put right, you are naked and miserable. You may deck yourself, but you can not keep out the chill cold of spiritual death. There was a Quaker riding home with a magnificently-dressed lady in the same carriage. She was very lightly clad in full dress, but all ablaze in diamonds and jewelry according to the dictates of fashion; and she was shivering while the Quaker, well wrapped up, and dressed in a reasonable manner, was quite comfortable.

"Oh," she said, "what am I to do to get warmth?"

The Quaker looked at her, and replied: "I do not see anything you can do, except to put on another brooch."

He was sarcastic, the old Quaker; the brooch would not keep out the cold; that he knew.

And you, you are taking the same advice. When your soul is cold to death, and shivering, you are putting on a brooch of church attendance, and a few necklets and bracelets of ecclesiastical custom; and all the while you are shivering.

Poor soul, you need warmth, you need grace, you need the clothing of His righteousness, you need the garments of His merits: you are down, you are stripped and lost. If you would just realize that there would be some hope for you.—John Robertson.

242. Death of Christian and Infidel.

The French nurse who was present at the deathbed of Voltaire, being urged to attend an Englishman whose case was critical, said: "Is he a Christian?" "Yes," was the reply, "he is, a Christian in the highest and best sense of the term—a man who lives in the fear of God; but why do you ask?" "Sir," she answered, "I was the nurse who attended Voltaire in his last illness, and for all the wealth of Europe I would never see another infidel die."—Rev. Geo. F. Pentecost, D.D.

243. Body of Death.

In Virgil there is an account of an ancient king, who was so unnaturally cruel in his punishments, that he used to chain a dead man to a living one. It was impossible for the poor wretch to separate himself from his disgusting burden. The carcas was bound fast to his body, its hands to his hands, its face to his face, its lips to his lips; it lay down and rose up whenever he did; it moved about with him whithersoever he went, till the welcome moment when death came to his relief. And many suppose that it was in reference to this that Paul cried out: "O wretched man that I am!" &c. Whether this be so or not, sin is a body of death, which we all carry about with us. And while I do not wish to shock your taste, yet I do wish to give you some impression of the unclean, impure, offensive nature of sin. And think—if our souls are polluted with such a stain—oh! think what we must be in the eyes of that God in whose sight the very heavens are not clean, and who charges His angels with folly.—E. Woods.

244. Sin and Death.

The tale of the goblet, which the genius of a heathen fashioned, was true; and taught a moral of which many a death-bed furnishes the melancholy illustration. Having made the model of a serpent, he fixed it in the bottom of a cup. Coiled for the spring, a pair of gleaming eyes in its head, and in its open mouth fangs raised to strike, it lay beneath the ruby wine. Nor did he who raised that golden cup to quench his thirst, and quaff the delicious draught, suspect what lay below, till, as he reached the dregs, that dreadful head rose up and glistened before his eyes. So, when life's cup is nearly emptied, and sin's last pleasure quaffed, and unwilling lips are draining the bitter dregs, shall rise the ghastly terrors of remorse, and death, and judgment, upon the despairing soul. Be assured, a serpent lurks at the bottom of guilt's sweetest pleasure. To this awful truth may God, by His Word and Holy Spirit, open your eyes!—T. Guthrie, D.D.

245. "If I Should Die To-night."

If I should die to-night,
My friends would call to mind, with loving thought,
Some kindly deed the icy hand had wrought,
Some gentle word the frozen lips had said;
Errands on which the willing feet had sped—
The memory of my selfishness and pride,
My hasty words, would all be put aside,
And so I should be mourned tonight.

Oh, friends, I pray to-night,
Keep not your kisses for my dead, cold brow.
The way is lonely; let me feel them now.
Think gently of me; I am travel worn;
My faltering feet are pierced with many a thorn.
Forgive! O hearts estranged, forgive, I plead!
When dreamless rest is mine, I shall not need
The tenderness for which I long to-night.
—R. C. Meyers.

DECISION.

246. God Respects Man's Freedom.

It was said by a celebrated orator in the House of Lords a century ago, that an Englishman's house is his castle, that the winds of heaven might enter by every window, that the rains might penetrate through every cranny, but that not even the sovereign of the land dare enter into it, however humble, without its owner's permission. God treats you in the same way. He says: "Willingly open your heart to Me, and I will give you every blessing; but I must be made welcome."—G. Warner.

247. Choice Necessary.

Life in this world is only a choice of difficulties. If we avoid them in one direction it is but to meet them in another. It will cost us much to be true to our vocation, but the penalty will be greater if we are not. It is "hard to be a Christian," but it is harder not to be! When those who have once seen the vision and "tasted the heavenly gift" draw back, they invite experiences compared with which the trials of the saint are light and sweet. The really "hard" thing is to "kick against the pricks." The way of the transgressors is hard.—Robinson: The Personal Life of the Clergy.

248. Answer Now.

Suppose yourself placed in the same position as King Antiochus. When the Roman ambassador met him and asked him whether it was to be peace or war, he said he must have time to consider. The ambassador with his sword drew a circle in the sand. "Give an answer," he said, "before you move out of that circle, or if you step out of it your answer is war." I think there is such a phase in a man's life, when he must give a prompt reply. I know what that answer will be unless God the Holy Ghost makes you give the right one, but you must give it one way or the other, and if the man saith: "No, I will give no answer," yet if he stop beyond that appointed hour, it is war between him and God forever, and the sword shall never be sheathed, nor go back into its scabbard. He hath thrown down the gauntlet, by refusing to give a decisive pledge of obedience. The Lord hath declared eternal war against him; peace shall not be made forever. Before you go farther, which shall it be?—C. H. Spurgeon.

249. Decision for Christ.

After the disgraceful defeat of the Romans, at the battle of Allia, Rome was sacked, and it seemed as if, at any moment, the Gauls might take the Capitol. Among the garrison was a young man of the Fabian family, and on a certain day the anniversary of a sacrifice returned, when his family had always offered sacrifice upon the Quirinal Hill. This hill was in the possession of the Gauls; but when the morning dawned, the young man took the sacred utensils of his god, went down from the Capitol, passed through the Gallic sentries, through the main body, up the hill, offered sacrifice, and came back unharmed. It was always told as a wonder among Roman legends. This is just how the Christian should act when decision for Christ is called for. Though he be a solitary man in the midst of a thousand opponents, let him, at the precise moment when duty calls, fearless of all danger, go straight to the appointed spot, do his duty, and remember that consequences belong to God, and not to us. I pray God that after this style we may witness for Christ.—C. H. Spurgeon.

250. Obeying Implicitly.

I have stood on the deck of a ship while she was toiling upstream, with wind and water against her, and I have gone up to the man at the wheel, and said: "Jack, why don't you ease her off a point or two? You see how it would relieve her." But the answer was: "No, I can't luff; that is the point of the compass the captain gave me, and I must keep her to it." "But man," I remonstrated, "if you keep her as she is, soon the bulwarks will be stove in, and there is every chance that under this fearful strain she may spring a leak." "That is none of my business; it is the captain's lookout. All I have to do is to obey his orders," was the man's answer. The captain, however, understood his business, and we arrived safe in harbor. Sometimes if we do exactly as Christ commands, it appears as if our business would be ruined, our reputation lost—as if, indeed, we should be totally wrecked. That, however, is the captain's lookout. All we have to do is to implicitly obey.—Wm. Scott.

251. Surrender.

The foreman of a certain works in the north had often heard the Gospel, but he was troubled with the fear that he might not come to Christ. His good master one day sent a card round to the works: "Come to my house immediately after work." The foreman appeared at his master's door, and the master came out, and said somewhat roughly: "What do you want, John, troubling me at this time? Work is done, what right have you here?" "Sir," said he, "I had a card from you saying that I was to come after work." "Do you mean to say that merely because you had a card from me you are to come up to my house and call me out after business hours?" "Well, sir," replied the foreman, "I do not understand you, but it seems to me that, as you sent for me, I had a right to come." "Come in, John," said his master, "I have another message that I want to read to you," and he sat down and read these words: "'Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Do you think that after such a message from Christ that you can be wrong in going to Him?" The poor man saw it all at once, and believed, because he saw that he had good warrant and authority for believing. —C. H. Spurgeon.

252. Only Way.

A man recently gave directions to another who stopped to ask him the way to a certain street. "That's the best way, is it?" asked the inquirer, a little doubtfully. "It is the only way," was the quick answer. "The other road will land you back where you started." — Sunday School Times.

253. Spiritual Surgery.

It is sometimes necessary, in order to save life, to cut off some portion of the human body; and in such cases it is always necessary to cut where the flesh is perfectly sound. A man had a diseased finger; he hated to lose it, and he waited. At length as it grew worse, he consented to have it cut off; but he had delayed too long, the hand had become diseased, and after some hesitation he was obliged to have the hand amputated. But again he was too late; the arm was affected, and in its turn the arm had to be amputated. But the disease had gone too far to be arrested and the man died. An amputation of the finger at first, or of the hand or arm at an early stage of the disease, might have arrested its progress; but delay resulted in death. Whenever an amputation is performed, if it is to avail anything, the cut should be where the flesh is perfectly sound and healthful; then the wound may be expected to heal.—Hastings.

254. To-day.

"It is not after the storm has arisen, or the telegraph has reported that his ship has struck, that the merchant runs to insure his goods. He effects the insurance while the sun is shining and the air calm; he effects the insurance before the ship has cleared from the dock, or at all events before the ship has left the river. Go and do likewise, living, but dying men! Now is the accepted time; to-day, according to the true testimony of his adversaries: "This man receiveth sinners." God with us is waiting; still his terms are: "Whosoever will." To-day you may enter into life; to-morrow the door may shut."—C. H. Spurgeon.

255. Keep the Rudder True.

In ancient heroic story there is one figure of which I often think. It is the figure of the old pilot who was sailing his boat in the crisis of a storm on the great tempestuous Ægean Sea, and in his extremity he was seen to stand erect and cry, in his old pagan way: "Father Neptune, you may sink me if you will, or you may save me if you will, but whatever happens I will keep my rudder true." Everyone can say that. It is not for us to decide our own destinies. It is not for us to say we shall not be overwhelmed by certain storms; it is not for us to say we shall never go under. We do not know how hard the trial is yet to be. But this we can say: "Sink me if you will, or save me if you will, but whatever happens I will never drift, I will steer straight, I will keep my rudder true." By God's grace everyone can do that. —C. Silvester Horne.

256. Determined Will.

An explorer in Asia, with the few natives who accompanied him, was driven out of his course by adverse circumstances, met by a sandstorm that caused great discomfort and delay, and finally the little caravan found itself without water. The party struggled on for a time, but one after another the weary natives gave up the march as hopeless and dropped by the way until only one of the four or five remained. Then he, too, became exhausted and could go no farther, and the white man pressed on alone. He believed there was water in the direction in which he was going, and though he was weak with fatigue and half-crazed by thirst, he forced himself forward until at last the blessed sound of a running stream reached him. He threw himself down beside the water to drink in new life, to bathe his parched face and hands and his swollen feet, and to gather strength presently to go back to the help of his companions. When asked afterwards how it was that he had so much more endurance than the natives of the country, he answered that he believed the difference to be mental rather than physical. The natives have a dreary creed of fate—what is to come will come, and it is useless to battle—and this robs them of the hope and courage, the determined will that is the heritage of the white man and belongs to the creed of Christianity. The explorer had faith in the final outcome of his mission; he believed in the water ahead and the possibility of reaching it, and so nerved himself to endurance.—C. Lee Cook.

257. Act at Once on Convictions.

It is beyond my power to tell the importance of acting at once on your convictions. You will never attain to eminence without it. The pages of history are bright with the names, and the pathway of eminence is now crowded with men who added this to other qualities of mind—they carried out their purposes with a depth and power of resolution before which no ordinary considerations were permitted to stand. Take an instance. Nearly a hundred years ago, a young man from Peterborough entered Christ's College, Cambridge. His head was clear, but his manners clumsy, his time wasted, and his University privileges fast passing away in idleness. He had spent an evening at a party. At five o'clock next morning he was awakened by one of his companions standing at his bedside. "Paley," said he, "what a fool you are to waste your time this way! I could do nothing if I were to try; you could do anything. I have had no sleep with thinking about you. Now, I am come to tell you that, if you continue this idle life, I shall renounce your society." The admonition was not lost. That very day, the startled sluggard formed a new plan for life. He rose every morning at five; he continued at work till nine at night. He kept his resolution. His industry was unconquerable, his progress unrivalled, until, in the general examination, at the top of the list, as Senior Wrangler, stood the name of William Paley, whose varied writings on Christian Evidences have rendered the greatest service to the cause of truth. The whole success of your recovery, young man, hinges upon immediate decision. You must arise and go to your Father. Four-and-twenty hours' delay may utterly ruin your purpose. Oh, that every one here, who feels the relentings for past sin, would this night put his purpose into effect.—W. B. MacKenzie, M.A.

258. Pleasing Men or Serving Christ.

A railway gatekeeper, who one cold night required every passenger to show his ticket before passing through to the train, and was rewarded with considerable grumbling and protesting, was told: "You are a very unpopular man tonight." "I only care to be popular with one man," was the reply, "and that is the superintendent." He might have pleased the passengers, disobeyed orders, and lost his position. He was too wise for that; his business was to please one man—the man who hired him, gave him his orders, and rewarded him for faithfulness, and who would discharge him for disobedience. The servant of Christ has many opportunities to make himself unpopular. There are multitudes who would be glad to have him relax the strictness of his rules. If he is their servant, they demand that he should consult their wishes. But if he serves them, he cannot serve the Lord. "No man can serve two masters." He who tries to be popular with the world, will lose his popularity with the Lord. He will make friends, but he will lose the one Friend who is above all others. He will win plaudits, but he will not hear the gracious words: "Well done!"—T. Guthrie, D.D.

259. Danger of Pleasing Men.

The wise Phocion was so sensible how dangerous it was to be touched with what the multitudes approved that upon a general acclamation made when he was making an oration he turned to an intelligent friend and asked in a surprised manner: "What slip have I made?" —Steele.

260. Leap for Life.

There is a story told of a captain of a man-of-war whose son—a young lad—was very fond of running up the rigging of the ship; and at one time, running after a monkey, he ran up the mast, till at last he got on the main-truck. Now, the main-truck, you are aware, is like a large round table put on the mast, so that when the boy was on the main-truck there was plenty of room for him; but the difficulty was—to use the best explanation I can—that he could not reach the mast that was under the table; he was not tall enough to get down from this main-truck, reach the mast, and so descend. There he was on the main-truck; he managed to get up there, somehow or other, but down he never could get. His father saw that, and he looked up in horror; what was he to do? In a few moments his son would fall down and be dashed to pieces. He was clinging to the main-truck with all his might, but in a little time he would fall down on the deck, and there he would be a mangled corpse. The captain called for a speaking-trumpet; he put it to his mouth, and shouted: "Boy, the next time the ship lurches, throw yourself into the sea." It was, in truth, his only way of escape; he might be picked up out of the sea, but he could not be rescued if he fell on the deck. The poor boy looked down on the sea; it was a long way; he could not bear the idea of throwing himself into the roaring current beneath him; he thought it looked angry and dangerous. How could he cast himself down into it? So he clung to the main-truck with all his might, though there was no doubt that he must soon let go and perish. The father called for a gun, and pointing it up at him, said: "Boy, the next time the ship lurches, throw yourself into the sea, or I'll shoot you." He knew his father would keep his word; the ship lurched on one side, over went the boy splash into the sea, and out went brawny arms after him; the sailors rescued him and brought him on deck. Now, we, like the boy, are in a position of extraordinary danger, by nature, which neither you nor I can possibly escape of ourselves. Unfortunately, we have got some good works of our own, like that main-truck, and we cling to them so fondly that we will never give them up. Christ knows that unless we do give them up, we shall be dashed to pieces at last, for that rotten trust must ruin us. He therefore says: "Sinner, let go thine own trust, and drop into the sea of my love." We look down and say: "Can I be saved by trusting in God? He looks as if He were angry with me, and I could not trust Him." Ah! Will not mercy's tender cry persuade you?—"He that believeth shall be saved." Must the weapon of destruction be pointed directly at you? Must you hear the dreadful threat—"He that believeth not shall be damned"? It is with you now as with that boy: your position is one of imminent peril in itself, and your slighting the Father's counsel is a matter of more terrible alarm, it makes peril more perilous. You must do it, or else you perish! Let go your hold! That is faith when the poor sinner lets go his hold, drops down, and so is saved; and the very thing which looks as if it would destroy him, is the means of his being saved. Oh, believe on Christ, poor sinners; believe on Christ. Ye who know your guilt and misery come, cast yourselves upon Him; come, and trust my Master, and as He lives, before whom I stand, ye shall never trust Him in vain; but ye shall find yourselves forgiven, and go your way rejoicing in Christ Jesus.—C. H. Spurgeon.

261. Infirmity and Efficiency.

Torstensohn was one of the generals formed in the school of Gustavus Adolphus. To him that great commander transmitted the prosecution of the Thirty Years' War. Physically, he was so shattered and dislocated by disease and deformity that he could neither walk nor ride on horseback. He had to be carried at the head of his forces in a litter. Yet no commander of his age was so resistless and terrible in his onset and so invariably victorious. Let us be loath to accept infirmity as an excuse for uselessness. A naturalist asks: "How is it that the golden-crested wren, apparently so weak and helpless, can fly right across the North Sea from Norway?" Because God knows how to fix strange energy within delicate organisms. Our very infirmities through resolution and grace may give us special efficacy.—W. L. Watkinson.

262. It's No Use.

Doctor Brown was surprised to find Jack home so early from school. "Isn't there any football practice to-day, Jack?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, father, but I'm not going out any more," Jack answered. "I haven't any chance to make the team. I've been out for a month, and tried hard, but it's no use."

Doctor Brown seemed disappointed. "It doesn't matter whether you make the team or not, Jack," he said, "but it does matter a great deal whether you tried with all your might and main to do something you set out to do."

"Well, I tried all right," said Jack uneasily.

"I don't believe it," answered his father with energy. "You wanted to make that team, but you found that you were competing with boys a bit heavier or with more natural aptitude for the game than you had, and because you saw that the odds were against you, you quit. The odds may always be against you in everything you undertake in life. Does that mean that you are always going to quit? Every man who ever accomplished anything really worth while did it in spite of tremendous odds. It doesn't matter whether or not you ever accomplished anything that the world deems great, but it does matter whether or not you are going to lie down in the face of difficulty or whether you are going to develop the character that keeps on trying and never admits defeat. Just 'trying' never got a man anywhere. It's trying again and again, no matter how often you are defeated. It's trying even when it seems no use to keep on. That's the way to win the victories of life."

Jack was making for the door. "It isn't too late yet, father. Maybe I won't make the team, but it won't be my fault if I don't."

Doctor Brown smiled. "That's the way for a man to talk," he said.—Youth's Companion.

263. Acknowledging God.

When the old Spanish mariners, in their explorations, touched any new land, the first thing they did was to run up the flag of Ferdinand and Isabella to the masthead on the highest point that they could reach on the new land. Every new shore was claimed for Spain. The sovereigns that encouraged the explorations of these Spanish mariners were acknowledged when the first foot touched the new shore. Ah, man! when you get your new situation, when you set up your new home, when new circumstances arrive in your life, it is grand to run up the flag of God's Son, and say: "This new situation—this new era in my life—will be the acknowledgment of God in the person of His Son."—John Robertson.

264. Fatal Decision.

A young soldier from Glasgow was talking to a comrade. In their ears was the muffled sound, the "Dead March in Saul," as a comrade was carried to his last resting-place; and this Glasgow soldier, converted up there at Maryhill, was talking to his friend, and pleading with him to come to Christ. The young Highlander there in the funeral march was terribly impressed, and he said: "Jack, I will be a Christian when I leave the service." He had just nine months to put in. He said: "I am determined to be a Christian when I leave the service." Ah! That was his decision. Next week there came orders for the 79th to embark for Egypt. The two friends were in the march across the sands to the Arab encampment of Tel-el-Kebir, marching side by side—the one with the acceptance of salvation in his heart, and the other putting it off till he should leave the service. Softly did they walk across these sands, silently did they steal through the darkness of midnight to the camp of the slumbering Arabs; but the sentinels were on the alert, and they saw a flash of light, and five hundred rifles from the Arab encampment poured their bullets on the advancing Highlanders; and there, dead and cold, was the body of the man who put off the acceptance till he should leave the service. Oh, comrade, what a fatal decision!—John Robertson.

265. On the Fence.

One of Solon's laws was that, in case of insurrection in the city, he who does not attach himself to either party, or act on either side, shall be branded with civic infamy. Solon's theory was that neutrality in a disturbed condition of the State indicated either indifference to the public well-being, or the most sordid selfishness.—Dr. Peabody's "Plutarch on the Delay of Fine Justice."

266. Steam Enough to Start.

Once I was going out of Atlanta. Just before the engine backed down to couple on the passenger train, I was walking out around the engine. I wanted to look at the magnificent locomotive that would pull us out toward my home. The engineer was oiling it up. Directly he looked up in the cab and said to the fireman: "Have you got steam enough to start?" The fireman answered: "Yes." I walked back and examined the steam gauge and I saw he had about seventy or eighty pounds of steam. About three minutes later he rolled his engine back, coupled on to the passenger train, rang his bell and moved out. When I got on that train I thought: "Well, it is strange; it is one hundred and thirty-eight miles to Chattanooga, a great deal of it up grade; that engine carries one hundred and sixty pounds of steam, and he left here with eighty pounds. I wonder what in the world is the matter with those men? What do they mean? Then I got to thinking. The engineer never asked if he had enough steam to run to Marietta, twenty miles, nor enough to run to Cartersville, fifty miles, nor enough to run to Chattanooga, one hundred and thirty-eight miles, but he asked: "Have you got enough to start with?" Just before we got to the Chattahoochee River, seven miles from Atlanta, the engine turned around the curve, and why, she was blowing off; she had more steam than she wanted; she had more than one hundred and sixty pounds. Then I got to thinking this way: Suppose that engineer had stopped and waited in Atlanta until the engine had steam enough to run to Chattanooga. That would have blown the engine into ten thousand pieces; she couldn't have held it to save the world. There is a little fellow out there who is waiting for enough religion to take him to glory; before he will turn a wheel, if he could get that much into his little soul, it would blow him into ten thousand fragments.—Sam Jones.

267. Race Set Before Us.

In Athens, long ago, games used to be held in honour of the Grecian gods and heroes. One of these was a torch-race—that is, a race of torch-bearers—which was run at night in honour of Prometheus. The starting point was a mile and a half out of the city, in the olive grove where Plato had his "Academy," this spot being chosen because Prometheus had a sanctuary there. The winning-post was within the city; and the runner who reached it first with his torch still burning gained the prize. In like manner our Christian life here on earth is "the race that is set before us." We shall have run that race well if, when we come at last into God's presence, our lights are still burning. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."—C. Jerdan.

268. Perseverance.

It is said of Bruce that, in prison, and discouraged with the heat of his campaign for the liberties of his country, he in moody thoughts meditated giving up the struggle; but as he lay and thought, a spider, spinning down, caught his web upon some point, and almost fell to the floor. Not daunted, it crept up and back, and started again; and missed again. And again it tried, and fell again. It went through seven trials, and finally, on the eighth, caught and established itself. And then, with a base-line laid, it formed its web. Bruce took heart from that, through rebuke, and determined never to give up the struggle. And at last victory came.—H. W. Beecher.

269. "Tell God You Love Him."

In the Middle West some years ago was a gentleman whose little child was born deaf and dumb. Shortly afterward her mother died. He was left alone to care for her, and so lovingly did he care for her that a friend said he never saw anything like it on earth. The child of the family who is crippled always gets the most love and care. He simply surrendered his life to her. Outside of business hours he spent his whole time with her. They were constant companions and the sweetest kind of affection was theirs. They learned a sign language; no one could understand it, but they could understand it. So those early years passed by and then he came to the moment when he was going to Europe to be gone several months. A friend said to him: "I would place this child of yours in that institution, where they do wonderful things for the deaf and dumb. She will be best cared for there." He decided to do it. Nearly a year passed by and he was to return. His child had always respected and admired her father, but that absence almost took her heart and drew it across the sea. She was all the time talking about her father. There was a special reason why she could hardly wait for him to return. It was not enough to just take the step to know the father and appreciate the father. That was not enough. Something else was the supreme element and when he came back this was what took place. That child rushed into her father's arms and pressed her little lips up to his ear and to his amazement she said: "Papa, I love you." They had taught her in seven months to move her lips and say "Papa." He dropped like a dead man on the floor. It was too much for him. He was completely overcome. She could hardly wait to get her lips up to his ear and tell him that she loved him.

Do you know that is the normal, natural attitude of the human heart toward God at its best? We do not need to know only the facts about Him. Those are all known to every one of us. It is not that. God is waiting for you, just to have your heart move out toward Him and to hear your whisper of love. Just tell God that you love Him.—Cortland Myers, D.D.

270. Act in the Living Presence.

"What use for the rope, if it be not flung
Till the swimmer's grasp to the rock has clung?
What worth is Eulogy's blandest breath
When whispered in ears that are hushed in death?
No! No! if you have a word of cheer,
Speak it while I am alive to hear."
—Margaret Preston.

271. Timely Decision.

When Moody and Sankey were conducting services in the mining region of England, coming out of the services one night, they noticed a man sitting just underneath the gallery. Although everybody else had left the church, he still remained. Mr. Moody sat down beside him, and found that he had been a constant attendant upon the services, and that he had determined this night that he would not leave the building until he had settled the question of his soul's salvation. After prayer and the study of the Bible the matter was settled.

He returned to his home, and the next day entered the mine, where there was a terrific explosion. He was taken out more nearly dead than alive, and carried a little way from the entrance to the mine. One of his friends stooped down to moisten his lips; he was too weak to speak, but they saw his lips moving, and finally they could make out his speech. Over and over again he was saying: "It's a good thing I settled it last night."

So it would be for everyone; when God calls, it is dangerous to wait. To-day we may yield to His voice; to-morrow may be eternally too late.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

272. Jim's Way.

Christianity has transforming power. One who has led an evil life and then has become a true Christian will alter his purposes and habits and will put away from him all temptations to former evil practices. A baggageman named Jim knew how to put one sort of temptation out of his way. He owned a number of game roosters, and one morning he cut off all their heads. When he told his wife what he had done, she said they were too old to cook, and she could not see why he had done so foolish a thing. "I don't care," said Jim, "I haven't any use for them any longer. I used to take a couple of them out in a lot where people would see them Sunday mornings on their way to church, and then I would fight them for all they were worth. I'm none too strong anyway, and so I thought that if I killed the roosters no fellow could come along some Sunday morning and say: 'Come, Jim, put a couple of them in a bag, and let's go and fight them.' If they're dead, I can't go, can I?" —Tarbell's "Teacher's Guide."

273. Need Inspires Energy.

After Sir Colin Campbell's silent retreat from Lucknow in the last Indian War, Captain Waterman was left behind. He had gone to his bed in a retired corner of the brigade mess-house and having overslept himself was forgotten. At two o'clock in the morning, to his great horror, he found all was deserted and silent, and that he was alone in an open entrenchment with 15,000 furious barbarians just outside. Frightened, he took to his heels and ran himself nearly out of breath, till he overtook the retiring rear-guard, mad with excitement, and breathless with fatigue. But was not his earnestness reasonable, seeing that he realized his danger? And if unconverted sinners realized their danger, would they not be desperately in earnest?—A. Tucker.

274. Over the Line.

Drawing his sword, Pizarro traced a line with it on the sand from east to west. Then, turning towards the south: "Friends and comrades," he said, "on that side are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, desertion and death; on this side, ease and pleasure. There lies Peru with its riches; here, Panama and its poverty. Choose, each man, what best becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go to the south." So saying he stepped across the line. He was followed by the brave pilot Ruiz; next by Pedro de Candia, a cavalier, born, as his name imports, in one of the isles of Greece.

Eleven others successively crossed the line, thus intimating their willingness to abide the fortunes of their leader, for good or for evil. Fame, to quote the enthusiastic language of an ancient chronicler, has commemorated the names of this little band, "who thus, in the face of difficulties unexampled in history, with death rather than riches for their reward, preferred it all to abandoning their honour, and stood firm by their leader as an example of loyalty to future ages."—W. H. Prescott.

275. Secret Disciples.

The boy was expressing the opinion of many older than himself when he said to his mother: "I should like to be just such a Christian as father is, for no one can tell whether he is a Christian or not." This father is like the clock attached to a certain church, which possessed neither face nor hands, but which was wound up by the sexton on Sundays and continued to tick year after year, affording an apt illustration of the religion which many are content to possess. The movements of the clock were as regular and accurate as anyone could desire, but, inasmuch as it kept the time to itself, no one was the better for its existence.—C. H. Robinson, D.D.

276. Dividing Lines.

There are many lines dividing this congregation to-night—some are rich and some are poor, some are young and some are old, some are learned and some are ignorant—but when the great ocean of eternity shall break upon these sands of time all these lines will be forever washed away. But there is one line that will never be erased, and that is the line that divides those that serve God from those that serve Him not. Are you on God's side? Do you want to be? Will you be to-night?—B. Fay Mills.

277. Count the Cost.

When Drake and the captains of Queen Elizabeth's time went out into the streets of Plymouth to get sailors, they told these sailors frankly of the storms of the Pacific and of the fevers of Panama. They honored their Devonshire comrades too much to get them to sign under any false pretense. But they also pointed to the Spanish gold and treasure, the glory of the expedition, and all England ringing with their praise; and the men of Elizabeth's chivalric and adventurous times enlisted for the voyage. But Jesus told the men enlisting under Him that they would live and labor in the midst of foes, that they would be ill-treated publicly and that they would suffer hatred and opposition from their own families. "The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." He left nothing out of the program of opposition and trial. Unlike Admiral Drake he had no worldly reward to offer them, only the guardianship of God, and the glory of God's grace, and Heaven at the last. And the men to whom He spoke, with the full knowledge of all that was before them, took up their cross and followed Him.—J. F. Carson.

278. Wilful Rejection of Salvation.

To me it is especially appalling that a man should perish through wilfully rejecting the Divine salvation. A drowning man throwing away the life-belt, a poisoned man pouring the antidote upon the floor, a wounded man tearing open his wounds—any of these is a sad sight. But what shall we say of a soul refusing its Saviour and choosing its own destruction?—C. H. Spurgeon.

279. Criminal Denial.

In Romola, in the picture of the crisis of Tito's life—Tito, you remember, the genial nature which was gradually led to crime by daily indulgence in little selfishness—George Eliot says: "He hardly knew how the words"—Tito had just denied his father, and the denial was useless as well as criminal—"he hardly knew how the cruel words had come to his lips: there are moments when our passions speak and decide for us, and we seem to stand by and wonder. They carry in them an inspiration of crime, that in one instant does the work of long premeditation."—G. A. Smith.

280. Power of Prejudice.

A man was stoutly asserting that there were no goldfields except in Mexico and Peru. A nugget dug up in California was shown him as convincing evidence against his positive statement to the contrary. So far from being disconcerted, he quietly answered: "This metal, I confess, is extremely like gold; and you tell me that it passes as such in the market. All this I do not dispute. Nevertheless, the metal is not gold, but auruminium; it cannot be gold, because gold comes only from Mexico and Peru." In vain was he told that the geological formation of California was similar to that of Peru, and that the metals were similar. He had made up his mind that gold existed only in Mexico and Peru; this was a law of nature; he had no reason to give why it should be so; but such had been the admitted fact for years, and from this opinioin he would not swerve.—J. N. Norton, D.D.

281. Irresponsive to God.

A man cannot get these Divine blessings if he does not want them. You take a hermetically sealed bottle and put it into the sea, it may float about in mid-ocean for a century, surrounded by a shoreless ocean, and it will be as dry and empty inside at the end as it was at the beginning. So you and I float, live, move, and have our being in that great ocean of the Divine love in Christ, but you can cork up your hearts and wax them over with an impenetrable cover, through which that grace does not come. And you do do it, some of you.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

282. Try!

I'll go to Jesus, though my sin
  Like mountains round me close;
I know His courts, I'll enter in,
  Whatever may oppose.

Prostrate I'll lie before His throne,
  And there my guilt confess;
I'll tell Him I'm a wretch undone
  Without His sovereign grace.

Perhaps He will admit my plea,
  Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
  And perish only there.

I can but perish if I go—
  I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
  I must forever die.
—William Jones.

283. Count the Cost.

“Many a tower will stand unfinished,
Planned, begun, abandoned, lost.
For the thoughtless, foolish builder
Failed to count the cost.

“Many an army, proudly marshalled,
Marches into helpless woe.
For the boasting, reckless leader
Underrates his foe.

“Many a vessel, richly freighted,
Sinks beneath the whelming deep.
For the watcher in the lookout
Heedless, falls asleep.

“Many a life goes out in darkness,
That might shine in endless day.
For the soul, bewitched by folly,
Barters it away.”

284. Decision.

“Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God’s new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever ’twist that darkness and that light.”

—J. R. Lowell.

DERELICTS.

285. Abandoned.

It is a sad thing for a man to be driven about by temptation and passion; his will weakened till it has no power,—and the soul abandoned by God. We speak of such a man as a wreck. Did you ever look upon that picture by Stanfields which he has called “The Abandoned”? The sky is dark and lowering, with forked flashes of lightening shooting athwart it; the ocean is wild and angry, and all over it lies a dreary loneliness that makes the spectator almost shudder. The only thing in sight is a huge hull without mast or man on board, lying helpless in the trough of the sea. The men who stood by her as long as it was safe have been picked up by some friendly vessel, and there that battered and broken thing floats at the mercy of the winds and waves. This is sad enough, but what is that compared to a human soul abandoned by friends; abandoned by itself; yea, abandoned like Saul, King of Israel, even by its God—drifting out over the ocean of life, soon to go down beneath the dark waters of despair and oblivion!—Rev. C. Perrin.

286. Power of Kindness.

A German, whose sense of sound was exceedingly acute, was passing by a church a day or two after he had landed in this country; and the sound of music attracted him to enter, though he had no knowledge of our language. The music proved to be a piece of nasal psalmody, sung in most discordant fashion; and the sensitive German would fain have covered his ears. As this was scarcely civil, and might appear like insanity, his next impulse was to rush into the open air and leave the hated sounds behind him. “But this too I feared to do,” said he, “lest offence might be given; so I resolved to endure the torture with the best fortitude I could assume; when lo! I distinguished, amid the din, the soft clear voice of a woman singing in perfect tune. She made no effort to drown the voices of her companions, neither was she disturbed by their noisy discord; but patiently and sweetly she sang in full, rich tones; one after another yielded to the gentle influence; and before the tune was finished all were in perfect harmony." I have thought of this story as conveying an instructive lesson for reformers. The spirit that can thus sing patiently and sweetly in a world of discord must indeed be of the strongest as well as the gentlest kind. One can scarcely hear his own voice amid the braying of the multitude; and ever and anon comes the temptation to sing louder than they, and drown the voices that cannot thus be forced into perfect tune. But this would be a pitiful experiment; the melodious tones, cracked into shrillness, would only increase the tumult. Stronger and more frequently comes the temptation to stop singing, and let discord do its own wild work. But blessed are they that endure to the end, singing patiently and sweetly, till all join in with loving acquiescence, and universal harmony prevails, without forcing into submission the free discord of a single voice.—Mrs. Childs' "Letters from New York."

287. Seek and Ye Shall Find.

Some men remind me of a poor immigrant who was discovered walking on the tracks of a railroad in New Jersey. On his back he carried a huge bulk and as he trudged on, tired and halt, he resembled Bunyan's pilgrim with his burden. In passing a station an agent ordered him off the track, reminding him that he was liable to arrest for trespassing. The man demurred and produced a railroad ticket good for passage from Jersey City to Scranton. The agent looked at him in amazement and asked why he was walking when he might ride. The stranger replied that he thought the ticket gave him only the privilege of walking over the road. His right was explained to him and the tired man with delight boarded the first train for his destination. Surely the angels must look with wonderment at the thousands who trudge along, anxious and careworn, bearing life's burdens without divine help and future hope, for every soul carries in the conscience the ticket of divine promise: "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." —O. A. Newlin, D.D.

288. Danger of Derelicts.

Some time ago, I came up from Porto Rico. The ship that brought me was caught in a fearful storm. We were locked in the stateroom to keep us out of danger. After it was all over, I asked the captain if a storm like that was not the thing he most feared. No, it was not. Such storms, he said, were common. I asked him if, in sailing to the north, an iceberg was not the thing most feared. And again he said there were other things more to be feared. "What is it then," I asked, "that you fear most?" "A derelict," he said, "a derelict—a ship that bears no compass, no chart, no sailors, no commander, that sails from no port, and to no port, that simply drifts." — J. Wilbur Chapman.

289. Idle and Aimless Living.

Some time ago I read in a paper of a gentleman being brought up before a magistrate. What was the charge against him? "Nothing very serious," you will say. He was found wandering in the fields. He was asked where he was going, and he said he was not going anywhere.

He was asked where he came from, and he said he did not know. They asked him where his home was, and he said he had none. They brought him up for wandering as—what? a dangerous lunatic. The man who has no aim or object in life, but just wanders about anywhere or nowhere, acts like a dangerous lunatic, and assuredly he is not morally sane. What! Am I aiming at nothing? Have I all this machinery of life, making up a vessel more wonderful than the finest steamboat, and am I going nowhere? My heart-throbs are the pulsing of a divinely arranged machinery; do they beat for nothing? Do I get up every morning, and go about this world, and work hard, and all for nothing which will last? As a being created of God for noblest purposes, am I spending my existence in a purposeless manner? How foolish!—C. H. Spurgeon.

290. Settled in Time.

A young fellow heard a preacher in the other days, and was greatly moved, and the preacher said: "When you have a religious impression, the time to act upon it is right then. The time when you hear God's call, in the which you ought to respond is right then." And the young fellow walked down the aisle and publicly made his surrender to Christ, saying: "It shall be right now that I take Christ as my Saviour," and he went back to the sawmill in the mountains where he worked, and the boys said that next morning he sang all the morning. Religion in the heart makes men sing. The boys said that he sang all the morning, and they moved the great logs to the sawmill, and as he went singing all that morning—the first morning that he had ever known what it was to be Christ's trusting disciple and follower—about noon his body was caught somehow in the machinery and crushed and mangled, so that a little while thereafter he went away into dusty death. When they got him out he faintly said: "Send for the preacher, that preacher in the church house at the foot of the mountains last night." The preacher fortunately was soon found and hurried up the mountain to the mill, and he bent down by the side of the dying fellow, and took his hand and said: "Charley, I have come. What would you like to say?" And with a smile on his face that was never on land or sea, he faintly pressed the minister's hand and said: "Wasn't it a glorious thing that I settled it in time?" Oh, my men and women, my men and women, I beseech you, in the great Saviour's name, turn your boat upstream before it is too late! "Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation." Let it be your time—your day. Lord, save Thou the people and they shall be saved!—George W. Truett, D.D.

291. If Thou Hadst Known.

In his intercourse with men, Jesus more than once virtually said that if they had really known who He was their course of action would have been widely different.

It was so of the whole Jewish nation. They had long waited and sighed for the coming of their Prince, but when He came they knew Him not. A young man was taken prisoner and was to be shot at sunrise. As he lay upon the ground that night between his sleeping guards, his heart was full of bitter thoughts. Oh, for a single sight of the dear ones at home! What would he not give to be free once more? Suddenly he saw a solitary figure steal out from behind a clump of bushes. The man saw that he was awake and began to make signs as though trying to communicate with him. He crept nearer and nearer. The soldier thought he could see a grin of derison on the man's face. Evidently one of his enemies had heard of his plight and had come there to taunt him. He was mad with rage. It was enough to have to die like a dog, but this cruel mocking was more than he could endure. With a shriek of anger he sprang up. In a moment his guards had awakened and the entire camp was in an uproar. In the midst of the excitement the stranger had fled, and the condemned man never knew that the one he repulsed was a friend who had come to deliver him from the hands of his enemies.

There are many men who will find out when it is too late that they allowed themselves to be blinded to their day of opportunity. If they had known that the trial they rebelled at was but a message of mercy! If they had known that the invitation they treated lightly was the last chance for escape! "If thou knewest who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."—Mattie M. Boteler.

292. Habit Hard to Stop.

A few years ago I was living in a suburban town about twelve miles west of St. Louis, Mo. One night I ran to catch a train to take me there and just managed to swing up on the back platform of the last car as it was pulling out. Feeling lucky that I had just caught it, I settled down for a nap till I reached my station. After about twenty minutes I looked out of the window to see where I was, and found the train was running right by the station at which I wished to get off. So I hurriedly found the conductor and told him I wanted to get off. He looked at me in surprise and said: "Why, what do you think you are on, anyhow? You didn't get the right train. The local was on the next track. This is the through express and doesn't stop until it gets to Jefferson City, one hundred and fifty miles from here." So I went on to Jefferson City and stayed all night.

A great many men have waked up to find themselves in something of the same fix I was in that night. They have started in with some habit without thinking very much about it, supposing they could stop whenever they wanted to, and then have discovered that they were on a "through" train, a force that was carrying them farther than they ever meant to go.—H. E. Luccock.

293. Almost, But Lost!

But now haven't you waited long enough? Somewhere there is an end to that waiting. I heard that faithful, Biblical preacher, George C. Needham, who held one of his last meetings with our church in Dallas, a wonderful gospel preacher, tell of three brothers yonder in Scotland, who got a boat and went out on one of the lakes of Scotland one day, rowing in the little boat. But those lakes are often swept by storms and winds that come down upon them all unexpectedly, and when those three brothers were far out yonder on the lake, a storm suddenly swept down upon the lake and turned over the boat, and the middle brother was caught in the rigging and drowned outright, but the oldest and youngest brothers somehow got out from under the boat, and they swam toward a rock, hundreds of yards out yonder, jutting up in the lake. That was their only chance to be saved, and with extreme difficulty they made their way toward that rock. At last the older brother reached it, all worn out, and all exhausted in strength. He did just reach it, and he looked back, and there, some yards away, came the younger brother, barely able to move his hands in those battling, climbing waves, his strength all gone. This older boy called to him, with what little strength he had left, trying to cheer him to hold out a little farther, that he might reach the rock. But he came a little farther and then went down. He could not make the rock. His strength was gone. The people on the shore yonder saw the distressing scene, and they got another boat and came to this oldest boy, and they found him almost wild in his grief. And over and over again he told the story of how it all happened, of how quickly the boat turned over, and how the middle brother drowned outright, and how he and the little brother got out and swam the best they could, and how he reached the rock, but was all given out, and how the little brother could not quite reach it. And the great preacher said the boy would wind up his story with the plaintive cry, over and over and over again: "Oh, lads, little brother was nearly saved! Little brother was nearly saved!" Sobbing his heart out, he would finish his story every time with the plaintive cry: "Oh, I tell you, little brother was nearly saved, nearly saved!"—George W. Truett, D.D.

294. Thinking and Doing.

Do you remember Munkacsy's great picture of "Christ Before Pilate"? There is Jesus, calm, majestic, with holy innocence stamped upon His brow; there is the bawling and howling mob clamouring for His blood; and there on the bench is Pilate with knit brow and troubled face, the very picture of hesitation and irresolution. He is trying to settle this question: "What shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ?" He had settled the first question easily enough and settled it aright. But he found it terribly hard to answer the second, and when he did answer it he answered it wrong. Put these two sentences of Pilate's side by side: "I find no fault in Him," "Take Him and crucify Him." And what do these two sentences preach but this, it is infinitely easier to think rightly of Jesus than it is to act rightly by Him?—J. D. Jones.

295. Derelicts.

There's a ship floats past with a swaying lurch,
No sails, no crew, no spar;
And she drifts from the paths of her sister ships
To the place where the dead ships are.
The song of her crew is hushed for aye,
Her name no man can say;
She is ruled by the tide and whatever wind blows—
And no one knows where the derelict goes.

There's a man slinks past with a lurching gait,
No joy, no hope, no star;
And he drifts from the paths of his brother men,
To wherever the other wrecks are.
The song of his youth is hushed for aye,
His name but he can say;

He is ruled by the tide and whatever wind blows—
And no one knows where the derelict goes.
—Harper's Monthly.

DOUBT.

296. Living in the Fog.

"Is it always foggy here?" inquired a lady passenger of a Cunard steamer's captain, when they were groping their way across the Banks of Newfoundland. "How should I know?" replied the captain, gruffly; "I do not live here." But there are some of Christ's professed followers who do manage to live in the chilling regions of spiritual fog for a great part of their unhappy lives.—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.

297. Infidels.

David Hume, who in his youth was a believer in Christianity, was appointed in a debating society to advocate the cause of infidelity, and familiarizing himself with the subtle sophisms of scepticism, became a life-long deist. Voltaire, it is said, at the age of five, committed to memory a sceptical poem, and the impressions made upon his mind were never obliterated.—"Getting on in the World."

298. Satan's Work.

H. W. Beecher, after hearing one of Ingersoll's lectures, told the story of a boy on crutches who tried to wend his way through a crowded street: He was crossing the road, and a man deliberately put his leg around the poor lad's crutch, and threw him down, to be trampled to death by the horses. That's what infidelity does; it takes away the crutch.—C. R. Scoville.

299. Ripping Off the Veneer.

In the backwoods of Canada there resided a good minister, who one evening went out to meditate, as Isaac did, in the fields. He soon found himself on the borders of a forest, which he entered, and walked along a track which had been trodden before him; musing, musing still, until at last the shadows of twilight gathered around him, and he began to think how he should spend a night in the forest. He trembled at the idea of remaining there, with the poor shelter of a tree into which he would be compelled to climb. On a sudden he saw a light in the distance, among the trees, and imagining that it might be from the window of some cottage where he would find a hospitable retreat, he hastened to it, and to his surprise saw a space cleared, and trees laid down to make a platform, and upon it a speaker addressing a multitude. He thought to himself: "I have stumbled on a company of people, who in this dark forest have assembled to worship God, and some minister is preaching to them, at this late hour of the evening, concerning the kingdom of God, and His righteousness"; but to his surprise and horror, when he came nearer he found a young man declaiming against God, daring the Almighty to do His worst upon him, speaking terrible things in wrath against the justice of the Most High, and venturing most bold and awful assertions concerning his own disbelief in a future state. It was altogether a singular scene; it was lighted up by pine knots, which cast a glare here and there, while the thick darkness in other places still reigned. The people were intent on listening to the orator, and when he sat down thunders of applause were given to him; each one seeming to emulate the other in his praise. Thought the minister: "I must not let this pass; I must rise and speak; the honor of my God and His cause demands it." But he feared to speak, for he knew not what to say, having come there suddenly; but he would have ventured, had not something else occurred.

A man of middle age, hale and strong, rose, and leaning on his staff, he said: "My friends, I have a word to speak to you to-night. I am not about to refute any of the arguments of the orator; I shall not criticize his style; I shall say nothing concerning what I believe to be the blasphemies he has uttered; but I shall simply relate to you a fact, and after I have done that you shall draw your own conclusions. Yesterday I walked by the side of yonder river; I saw on its floods a young man in a boat. The boat was unmanageable; it was going fast toward the rapids; he could not use the oars, and I saw that he was not capable of bringing the boat to the shore. I saw that young man wring his hands in agony; by-and-by he gave up the attempt to save his life, kneeled down and cried with desperate earnestness: 'O God! save my soul! If my body can not be saved, save my soul!' I heard him confess that he had been a blasphemer; I heard him vow that if his life were spared he would never be such again; I heard him implore the mercy of Heaven for Jesus Christ's sake, and earnestly plead that he might be washed in His blood. These arms saved that young man from the flood; I plunged in, brought the boat to shore, and saved his life. That same young man has just now addressed you, and cursed his Maker. What say you to this, sirs?" The speaker sat down. You may guess what a shudder ran through the young man himself, and how the audience in one moment changed their notes, and saw that after all, while it was a fine thing to brag and bravado against Almighty God on dry land, and when danger was distant, it was not quite so grand to think ill of Him when near the verge of the grave. We believe there is enough conscience in every man to convince him that God must punish him for his sin.—C. H. Spurgeon.

300. Folly of Atheism.

A suggestive scene took place lately in a railway car that was crossing the Rocky Mountains. A quiet business man, who with the other passengers had been silently watching the vast range of snow-clad peaks, by him seen for the first time, said to his companion: "No man, it seems to me, could look at that scene without feeling himself brought nearer to his Creator." A dapper lad of eighteen, who had been chiefly engaged in caressing his mustache, pertly interrupted, "If you are sure there is a Creator." "You are an atheist," said the stranger, turning to the lad. "I am an agnostic," raising his voice. "I am investigating the subject. I take nothing for granted. I am willing to be convinced. I see the mountains, I smell the rose, I hear the wind, therefore, I believe that mountains, roses, and wind exist. But I can not see, smell, or hear God. Therefore——" A grizzled old cattle-raiser glanced over his spectacles at the boy. "Did you ever try to smell with your eyes?" he said, quietly. "No." "Or hear with your tongue, or taste with your ears?" "Certainly not." "Then why do you try to apprehend God with faculties which are only meant for material things?" "With what should I apprehend

Him?" said the youth, with a conceited giggle. "With your intellect and soul—but I beg your pardon—" here he paused—"some men have not breadth and depth enough of intellect and soul to do this. This is probably the reason that you are an agnostic." The laugh in the car effectually stopped the display of any more atheism that day.—Selected.

301. Unkindness of Scepticism.

The Philadelphia *Inquirer* tells this story of the late Washington McLean: One terribly snowy, sleety day in Washington, he was sitting in the Riggs House reading-room, looking out upon the dreary scene on Pennsylvania Avenue. Presently in came Colonel Bob Ingersoll, the great agnostic. As he entered the apartment he held out his hand, saying, "Hello, Wash; How do you do?" Mr. McLean took his hand, and, as he did so, said, "Bob, I wish you could have been here a little while ago. I saw a scene out there that made me wish I were twenty years younger.

A poor, old crippled soldier was limping across the Avenue, when a young, lusty fellow ran by him, and, as he did so, kicked the crutch from him and tumbled him down into the slush." "The villain!" said Ingersoll. "He should have been sent to the penitentiary." "Do you really think so?" said McLean. "Why, certainly," replied the colonel. "What else could I think?" "And yet, Bob," said McLean, "that is what you are doing every week in the year. Here are poor, old, infirm Christians, with nothing to aid or support them but their belief in religion, nothing to keep them out of the mire of despair but faith, and yet you go about kicking the crutch from under them worse than even this fictitious fellow did to this fictitious soldier." Very true, with the one exception that our faith is a living thing, and can never be knocked away.—Sword and Trowel.

302. Sin of Unbelief.

A friend told me this tale, a few years ago, as we paced together the deck of a steamship on the Mediterranean, and talked of the things unseen. The chaplain of a prison, intimate with the narrator, had to deal with a man condemned to death. He found the man anxious, as he well might be—nay, he seemed more than anxious; convicted, spiritually alarmed. The chaplain's instructions all bore upon the power of the Redeemer to save to the uttermost; and it seemed as if the message were received, and the man were a believer. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the chaplain had come to think that there was ground for appeal from the death-sentence; he placed the matter before the proper authorities, and with success. On his next visit, very cautiously and by way of mere suggestions and surmises, he led the apparently resigned criminal towards the possibility of a commutation. What would he say, how would his repentance stand, if his life were granted him?

The answer soon came. Instantly the prisoner divined the position; asked a few decisive questions; then threw his Bible across the cell, and, civilly thanking the chaplain for his attentions, told him that he had no further need of him nor of his Book.—Bishop Moule.

303. Sceptical Artist Convinced.

"Irenæus," in one of his graceful sketches in the New York *Observer,* gives a striking account of the conversion of the artist who painted one of the beautiful national pictures that adorns the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington. When he selected his theme he was an utter unbeliever in Christianity. As a subject relating to American history was required, he chose the embarkation of the Pilgrim fathers, without a thought of its religious associations. After outlining his characters as grouped on the deck of the *Mayflower,* the question arose, why were they there? He saw that they were animated by some principle he could not comprehend. He studied their times, their lives, their deeds, their sacrifices, their plans and hopes; and as he studied the truth gradually stole into his own soul, till he had learned to believe in their God and Saviour. He found that the secret spring of all their actions was their religion; that their lives were hidden with Christ in God, and that they could abandon home, country, wealth, for freedom to live for Christ. Not till he became a Christian could he understand their motives or characters, or was he fitted to put his immortal work upon canvas.—The Christian Weekly.

304. Cry of the Doubting Soul.

"I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the world's great altar stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,
I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
On what I feel is Lord of all
And faintly trust the larger hope."

"For what am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the Light,
And with no language but a cry."
—Alfred Tennyson.

ETERNITY.

305. Eternity Endless.

I was preaching in the Lansing Theatre in London, Nebr., some years ago on the subject of eternity when one of the professors in the State University stood beside me to say, "Let me give you a definition of eternity," and I said, "Give it to me, and I will give it to the audience"; and he quoted, "Eternity begins where computation ends"; and I said to him, "Professor, tell me just what that means"; and then he replied, "If you should take a man possessed of the greatest mind that the world has ever known, and let him think his way out into the future until his mind would break down, then put your stake there; you would have the beginning of eternity," and alas, alas! it has no end. God save us from being without God and without hope not only in this world, but in the world to come.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

306. Eternity.

"How long sometimes a day appears!
And weeks how long are they!
Months move as if the years
Would never pass away.
But days and weeks are passing by,
And soon must all be gone,
For day by day the moments fly,
Eternity comes on.
Days, months, and years must have an end;
Eternity has none;
It will always be as long to spend
As when it first begun."
—J. Wilbur Chapman.

EXAMPLES.

307. Christ the Supreme Example.

We were examining Guido's "Aurora," in the summerhouse of the Rospigliosi Palace, and as we sat behind the row of artists busily copying the celebrated painting, we could not help noticing how they differed from each other as well as from the immortal fresco. After a time we called the attention of our guide to the fact that each of the painters had a different colour for the horses, and that no two copies were at all alike. With an expressive gesture he replied, "Don't look at them! Look only at the original!"

—W. Baxendale.

308. Inspiring Commander.

I have read of a distinguished general who conducted an army by forced marches through a sterile as well as a hostile country. They were footsore, worn, and weary; supplied with the scantiest fare, and toiling all day long, through heavy sands, and beneath a scorching sun. Yet his brave men pressed on—such as fell out of the line by day, unless shot down by the foe who crouched like tigers in every bush, and hung in clouds on their flanks and rear, rejoining their ranks in the cool and darkness of the night. Thus this gallant army, undaunted and indomitable, accomplished a great achievement in arms. And how? They were inspired by their commander. Foregoing the privileges of his rank, he dismounted from his horse to put himself not only at the head of his men, but on a level with them. He shared their hard bed; he lived on their scanty rations; every foot they walked he walked; every foe they faced he faced; every hardship they endured he bore; and with cheek as brown, and limbs as weary, and couch as rude as theirs, he came down to their condition—touched by their infirmities, and teaching them by his example what part to act, and with what patience to endure. They would have followed him to the cannon's mouth—his cry not Forward but Follow.

—T. Guthrie, D.D.

309. Christ-like Life.

A Scottish missionary, home on furlough from her work in India, told this story. She had been teaching a group of children one day, telling them the story of Jesus, bringing out bit by bit incidents showing His character. As she was talking one child, listening intently, grew excited, and then more excited. At last she was unable to restrain herself, and blurted out: "I know him; he lives near us." Was there ever such praise of a human?—S. D. Gordon.

310. Example Brings Men to Christ.

The Rev. J. A. James, the well-known minister of Birmingham, says, in one of his lectures: "If the present lecturer has a right to consider himself a real Christian, if he has been of any service to his fellow-creatures, and has attained to any usefulness in the Church of Christ, he owes it, in the way of means and instrumentality, to the sight of a companion, who slept in the same room with him, bending his knees in prayer on retiring to rest. That scene, so unostentatious, and yet so unconcealed, roused my slumbering conscience, and sent an arrow to my heart; for, though I had been religiously educated, I had restrained prayer, and cast off the fear of God. My conversion to God followed, and soon afterwards my entrance upon college studies for the work of the ministry. Nearly half a century has rolled away since then, with all its multitudinous events; but that little chamber, that humble couch, that praying youth, are still present to my imagination, and will never be forgotten, even amidst the splendour of Heaven and through the ages of eternity."

311. Momentous Example.

In one of our western cities, high up on a very tall building, is a large clock. It registers what is called "electric time," and is known to be very accurate because it is regulated by the calculations of scientific instruments. On a large sign is painted, "Correct City Time," and when one has any doubts about having the correct time, he sets his watch by this clock. Great mills, railroads, manufactories, run by its time. Should it lose or gain an hour the whole city would be thrown into confusion. Let us remember, one watch that goes wrong may be the means of misleading a whole multitude of others. So it is with life. A wholly consecrated person may become the example for many, and a wicked life of sin may, too, be the means of entangling a whole community of associates. "Examine yourselves." —Sharpened Arrows.

312. Holy Influence.

Many years ago a young fellow by the name of Wray, a student at Princeton College, applied for appointment as a foreign missionary. He was a thoroughly good man, but not very quick in respect to learning, and when he reached the field of his prospective labors he found it difficult to master the language. But though the simple natives could not understand his talk, they could understand his walk. One day when they, according to the custom in those countries, were seated in a circle on the ground, listening to the instruction of one of their teachers, the question was asked, "What is it to be a Christian?" And none could answer. But finally one pointed to where this young man sat, and replied: "It is to live as Mr. Wray lives." Not one of them could read the Gospel according to Matthew, to Mark, to Luke, or to John; but everyone there could read the Gospel according to Wray.—G. T. Dowling.

313. Example Counts.

While holding meetings in Egypt among some soldiers I asked a big sergeant in a Highland regiment how he was brought to Christ. His answer was: "There is a private in our company who was converted in Malta before the regiment came on to Egypt. We gave that fellow an awful time. One night he came in from sentry duty, very tired and wet, and before going to bed he got down to pray. I struck him on the side of his head with my boots, and he just went on with his prayers. Next morning I found my boots beautifully polished by the side of my bed. That was his reply to me. It just broke my heart, and I was saved that day."—Rev. J. Stuart Holden.

314. Brother in Time of Need.

A beautiful story is told of Agassiz. When he was a boy his family lived on the edge of a lake in Switzerland. One day the father was on the other side of the lake, and Louis and a younger brother set out on the ice to join him. The mother watched the boys from her window. They got along well till they came to a wide crack in the ice. The taller boy leaped over easily, but the other hesitated. "The little fellow will fall in," the mother said, "and drown." But as she watched a moment she saw Louis, the older boy, get down on the ice, lay himself across the crack, his hands on one side and his feet on the other, and make a bridge of his body. Then the little fellow climbed over him in safety to the other side, and both the boys ran on to find their father.—J. R. Miller.

315. Sentinels.

When Pompeii was destroyed there were many persons buried in the ruins who were afterwards found in very different positions. They found some in deep vaults, as if they had gone there for security. There were some found in lofty chambers. But where did they find the Roman sentinel? They found him standing at the city gate, where he had been placed by the captain, with his hands still grasping the weapon. There, while the earth shook beneath him; there, while the floods of ashes and cinders overwhelmed him, he had stood at his post; and there, after a thousand years, he was found. So let Christians stand by their duty, in the post at which their Captain places them.—Gospel Trumpet.

316. Influence of Associates.

The tree frog acquires the colour of whatever it adheres to for a short time. If it be found on the oak, it is a brown colour; on the sycamore or cedar, he is of a whitish brown colour; but when found on the growing corn he is sure to be green. Just so it is with young men. Their companions tell us what their characters are; if they associate with the vulgar, the licentious, and the profane, then their hearts are already stained with their guilt and shame, and they will themselves become alike vicious. Our moral and physical laws show how important it is to have proper associations of every kind, especially in youth. How dangerous it is to gaze on a picture or scene that pollutes the imagination or blunts the moral perceptions, or has a tendency to deaden a sense of our duty to God and man!—Christian Treasury.

317. Mistaken Piety.

Agnes de Rochier was the only daughter of one of the wealthiest merchants of Paris, and was admired by all the neighborhood for her beauty and virtue. In 1403 her father died, leaving her the sole possessor of his wealth, and rumour immediately disposed of her hand to all the young gallants of the quarter; but whether it was that grief for the loss of her parent had turned her head, or that the gloomy fanaticism of that time had worked with too fatal effect on her pure and inexperienced imagination, she took not only marriage and the male sex into utter abomination, but resolved to quit the world forever, and to make herself a perpetual prisoner for religion's sake. She determined, in short, to become what was then called a recluse, and as such to pass the remainder of her days in a narrow cell built within the wall of a church. On the 5th of October accordingly, when the cell, only a few feet square, was finished in the wall of the church of St. Opportune, Agnes entered her final abode, and the ceremony of her reclusion began. The walls and pillars of the sacred edifice had been hung with tapestry and costly cloths; tapers burned on every altar; the clergy of the capital and the several religious communities thronged the church. The Bishop of Paris, attended by his chaplains and the canons of Notre Dame, entered the choir and celebrated a pontifical mass; he then approached the opening of the cell, sprinkled it with holy water, and after the poor thing had bidden adieu to her friends and relations, ordered the masons to fill up the aperture. This was done as strongly as stone and mortar could make; nor was any opening left, save only a small loop-hole, through which Agnes might hear the offices of the church, and receive the aliments given her by the charitable. She was eighteen years old when she entered this living tomb, and she continued within it eighty years, till death terminated her sufferings! Alas for mistaken piety! Her wealth, which she gave to the church, and her own personal exertions during so long a life, might have made her a blessing to all that quarter of the city instead of remaining a useless object of compassion to the few, and of idle wonder to the many.—Chronicles of Paris.

318. Effective Reproof.

There was a boy at Norfolk Island who had been brought from one of the rougher and wilder islands, and was consequently rebellious and difficult to manage. One day Mr. Selwyn spoke to him about something he had refused to do, and the lad, flying into a passion, struck him in the face. This was an unheard-of thing for a Melanesian to do. Mr. Selwyn, not trusting himself to speak, turned on his heel and walked away. The boy was punished for the offence, and, being still unsatisfactory, was sent back to his own island without being baptized, and there relapsed into heathen ways. Many years afterwards Mr. Bice, the missionary who worked on that island, was sent for by a sick person who wanted him. He found this very man in a dying state, and begging to be baptized. He told Mr. Bice how often he thought of the teaching on Norfolk Island and when the latter asked him by what name he should baptize him, he said, "Call me John Selwyn, because he taught me what Christ was like that day when I struck him; and I saw the colour mount in his face, but he never said a word except of love afterwards." Mr. Bice then baptized him, and he died soon after.—"Life of Bishop John Selwyn."

319. Scourge of the Tongue.

Some folks lay themselves out to be as unpleasant as they can, and say disagreeable things. They are the wasps of human intercourse. The candid friends whom Canning so abhorred, the people who "speak their minds," but have minds that were far better not spoken.—H. O. Mackey.

320. Vultures.

There was a company of ladies at a minister's home. As he entered the room he heard them speaking in low tones of an absent friend. "She's very odd," said one. "Yes, very singular, indeed," said another. "Do you know she often does so and so?" said another, mentioning certain things to her discredit. The minister asked who it was. When told, he said, "Oh, yes, she is odd; she's remarkably singular. Why, would you believe it," he added in a low voice, "she was never heard to speak ill of any absent friend!"—The Earnest Christian.

321. Scandal a Poison.

Scandal, hydra-headed, poison-fanged, lives on the garbage of the world, and slays even after it is seemingly killed. There is a story of a cobra which got into a West Indian church during service. Some one saw it, went quietly out, procured a weapon, and coming back, cut off the snake's head. After the service the people went to look at the animal, and a native touched the dead head with his foot. He drew it back with a cry of pain, and in an hour he was dead. The poison-fangs had power to kill, though their owner was dead.—Christian Age.

322. Example—Bad.

A little clock in a jeweler's window in a certain western town stopped one day for half an hour, at fifteen minutes of nine. School children, noticing the time, stopped to play; people hurrying to the train, looking at the clock, began to walk leisurely; professional men, after a look at the clock, stopped to chat a minute with one another; working men and women noted the time and lingered a little longer in the sunshine, and all were half an hour late because one small clock stopped. Never had these people known how much they had depended upon that clock till it had led them astray.

Many are thus unconsciously depending upon the influence of Christians; you may think you have no influence, but you cannot go wrong in one little act without leading others astray.—The Seattle Churchman.

EXCUSES.

323. Foolish Excuse.

An ungodly man was once exhorted to become a Christian and his defence was that he could not understand the Bible. Said he, "I can not learn from reading the Bible where the negro came from, that's why I have never become a Christian." He was then asked whether it was his custom to attend to the most important duties of life first, or whether he gave those of less importance first consideration. He replied, "I always put the most important things first as any intelligent man would do." He was then asked which he regarded as the most important question—where the negro came from or where he was going? After some hesitancy he said, "Well, where I'm going, of course." This poor fellow was more concerned about the origin of the color of another man's skin than the salvation of his own soul. When I see men stumbling over questions which have no bearing upon the subject of their personal salvation I am reminded of the account of a civil service examination which an old soldier was taking with the view of securing a position as clerk in the pension department. One question was, "How far is the moon from the earth?" His reply was, "I do not know how far the moon is from the earth, but I know it is not near enough to interfere with my duties as a clerk in the pension department." There are those who climb a mountain on the road to hell without halting, but who stumble over a feather that chances to lie on the pathway to Glory. Mysteries and phenomena of physiology and science stagger them not, but in spiritual things they must know the reason of the cause and the wherefore of the why.—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

324. Inventing Excuses.

A traveler in Venezuela illustrates the readiness of men to lay their faults on the locality, or on anything rather than on themselves, by the story of a hard drinker who came home one night in such a condition that he could not for some time find his hammock. When this feat was accomplished, he tried in vain to get off his big riding-boots. After many fruitless efforts, he lay down in his hammock, and soliloquized aloud, "Well, I have travelled all the world over; I lived five years in Cuba, four in Jamaica, five in Brazil; I have travelled through Spain and Portugal, and been in Africa, but I never yet was in such an abominable country as this, where a man is obliged to go to bed with his boots on." Commonly enough are we told by ill-doers in excuse for their sins that no man could do otherwise were he in their position; that there is no living at their trade honestly; that in such a street shops must be open on a Sunday; that their health required an excursion to Brighton on the Sabbath because their labors were so severe; and so on, all to the same effect, and about as truthful as the soliloquy of the drunkard of Venezuela. —C. H. Spurgeon.

FAITH.

325. Necessity of Belief.

Air is universal, but unless each individual pair of lungs operates upon it, and puts in its claim for supplies, it might as well be in a vacuum. Here, for example, we rescue a drowning man, and we begin to induce artificial respiration. "What is wrong?" a bystander asks. We say, "The man cannot breathe." "Is there not enough air?" he asks. "Yes," we reply, "plenty of air, miles of air, but unless he can be made to draw upon it his life will be a vanishing spark." So with salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless your faith takes hold of Him there is but death for you.—Sunday School Chronicle.

326. Progressive Faith.

If we take a stranger to view the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, it is possible that he will say that the outside is the finest part of it, and that it looks best from a distance; or he may say that the entrance-hall, with its display of coloured marbles and polished granite, is the best part of the museum. Certainly there are many who look at Christianity in this manner, thinking it perhaps a magnificent ideal of life, especially as seen in history; or perhaps as seen at some distance, as we view Sunday from the other days of the week. And others there are who think that the entrance of the Christian life is the best part of it, who say honestly from experience that the beginning of the life was the best for them, the reason being that they stopped there; otherwise people never could think that the happiest part of the life was that immediately consequent on conversion; for in reality the path of the just is a shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. It is not like one of those ancient Egyptian temples of which one reads, in which we pass from daylight to shade as we enter, and into deeper gloom as we approach the secret shrine.—J. R. Harris.

327. Growing Faith.

I have read that, when the first cable of the suspension-bridge that now spans the Niagara was about to be laid, a thin thread was attached to a kite and both sent, on a favouring wind, to the other side of the river. By means of that thread, a heavier string was pulled across, and by it a heavier one still, and then a rope, and then a tow, and then the cable, and the other parts of that mighty bridge that enables the people to pass in safety, from one side to the other, over the roaring cataract beneath. Let but those who doubt or disbelieve fasten the tiny thread of faith that lingers in them still to the spiritual side of life, and gradually it will become stronger and stronger until it will grow into a mighty bridge that will carry them safely, over the seething and hissing abyss of doubts and perplexities, unto the yonder peaceful shore.—Rev. J. Krauskopf.

328. Faith That Saves.

"In an English town," says Dr. A. C. Dixon, "a report got out that the bank was about to fail. Five hundred people ran for their deposits on the same day. The pastor of the dissenting Church in the town was invited by the bank directors to meet them. They said to him, 'Sir, if these people press us to the wall, they will lose their money. If they don't press us, we will pay every dollar.' The pastor said, 'I will help you; I have some money, and I trust you.' He went home, got his money, came to the bank door, and, standing on the step, said, 'Friends, you all know me; I have been living here twenty-five years, and I believe in this bank. Here are three hundred pounds that I am going to deposit. I believe that the bank is good.' In less than thirty minutes every one of those people had dispersed, and the bank was saved by faith. Unbelief as to that bank was about to ruin it. The moment faith was implanted, the bank was saved. Railroads are saved by faith. Steamboats are saved by faith. Your business, friend, is saved by faith. Every good thing on earth is saved by faith. And when the infidel rails at the religion of Jesus Christ because we are saved by faith, he is railing at every institution that this country holds dear."

329. Believe or Perish.

When a shipwrecked sailor, left to the mercy of the waves, has no help within reach or view but a spar or mast, how will he cling to it, how firmly will he clasp it—he will hold it as life itself. If a passing billow sweep him from it, with all his might he will make for it again, and grasp it faster than ever. To part is to perish; and so he clings—and how anxiously! So the awakened sinner feels. The ocean of wrath surrounds him; its billows and its waves go over him. Hell yawns beneath to engulf him. The vessel is an utter wreck. All its floating timbers are very rottenness. Oh, how he strains his eye searching for a mast, a plank, a spar! His eye rests on the only hope, the only rock in the wide ocean of wrath, the Rock of Ages, the Lord Jesus. He makes for the Saviour—he clasps Him—he cleaves to Him. Every terror of sin and of unworthiness that strives to loosen his hold only makes him grasp with more terrible and death-like tenacity, for he knows that to part company is to perish.—R. B. Nichol.

330. Faith and Works.

That is a very instructive anecdote which St. Simon relates respecting the last hours of the profligate Louis XIV. "One day," he says, "the king, recovering from loss of consciousness, asked his confessor, Père Tellier, to give him absolution for all his sins. Père Tellier asked him if he suffered much. "No," replied the king, "that's what troubles me. I should like to suffer more, for the expiation of my sins." Here was a poor mortal, who had spent his days in carnality and transgression of the pure law of God. He is conscious of guilt, and feels the need of its atonement. And now, upon the very edge of eternity and brink of doom, he proposes to make his own atonement, to be his own redeemer and save his own soul, by offering up to the eternal Nemesis that was racking his conscience a few hours of finite suffering, instead of betaking himself to the infinite passion and agony of Calvary. This is a "work"; and, alas! "a dead work," as St. Paul so often denominates it. —Prof. Shedd.

331. Touch of Faith.

A lady was being shown through a corn-mill, worked by a river which ran close by the walls. But all the wheels were in silent inaction. "Where is the power?" she asked. She was shown a handle, and told to press upon it. She did, and the mighty force was instantly turned on, the wheels moved, and the place was alive with activity. The power of God moves in upon us at the touch of faith.—Methodist Times.

332. Many Keys Needed.

In the establishment of one of our great goldsmiths is a vast iron safe with many locks, containing immense treasure. But no one person can open that chest; the keys are in the hands of many trustees, and only by their concurrence can the hidden wealth be made manifest. Thus it is in the natural and in the spiritual world, the wealth of the divine blessing can be reached only through the brotherhood of saints. "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together." —W. L. Watkinson.

333. Value of Faith.

Look at that locomotive as it snorts like a giant warhorse to its place in the station at the head of the train. You have in that engine power of amplest capacity to drag at swiftest pace the far-stretching carriages. Boiler, tubes, pistons, fire, steam—all are in perfect order; and that broad-browed man gives assurance of tried ability to guide the charge committed to him. You look! Carriage after carriage is filled, the hour has struck, the bell rung; and yet there is no departure, no movement, nor would be till "crack of doom," if one thing remained as it now is. Aha! the lack is discovered; the uniting hooks that bind engine and train together were wanting. They have been supplied. Like two great hands they have clasped; and a screw has so riveted engine and carriage that they form, as it were, one thing, one whole; and away through the dark sweeps the heavy-laden train with its freight of immortals. Mark! no one ever supposes that it is the uniting hook, or link, or coupling, that draws the train. A child knows that it is the engine that draws it. Nevertheless, without that hook, or link, or coupling, all the power of the engine were of no avail; the train would stand still forever. Exactly so is it in the relation of faith to Christ. It is not our faith that saves us, but Christ who saves us.

—A. B. Grosart, D.D.

334. Wait on the Lord.

In the early spring of 1881 Captain Catherine Booth and her intrepid lieutenants, Florence Soper, Adelaide Cox, and Ruth Patrick, began life in Paris. With her own hand Catherine raised the flag at Rue d'Angoulême 66, in Belleville.

Here was a hall for six hundred, situated in a court approached by a narrow street. The bulk of the audience that gathered there night after night were of the artisan class. Some were young men of a lower type, and from these came what disturbance there was. The French sense of humour is keen, and there were many lively sallies at the expense of the speakers and singers on the platform. Meetings were held night after night, the Capitaine was never absent except on Saturdays. Those were days of fight, and she fought, to use her own phrase, like a tiger. She had to fight first her own heart. She knew her capacity, and God had done great things through her in England. The change from an audience of five thousand spellbound hearers in the circus of Leeds to a handful of gibing ouvriers in the Belleville quarter of Paris was indeed a clashing antithesis. A fortnight passed without a single penitent, and Catherine was all the time so ill that it was doubtful if she would be able to remain in the field. That fortnight was probably the supreme trial of her faith. The work appeared so hopeless! There was nothing to see. But for the Capitaine faith meant going on. It meant saying to her heart, "You may suffer, you may bleed, you may break, but you shall go on." She went on, believing, praying, fighting, and at last the tide of battle turned.—J. Strahan.

335. Faith of the Heart.

We remember to have heard a preacher describe this act of faith as follows: Look at that drowning man, hurried down the stream by the furious torrent with which he is convulsively struggling. His looks and cries bespeak the agony he feels. By and by his attention is directed to a life preserver, which his friends are placing in the most favourable position possible. He at once sees that if he is saved at all, it must be by that instrument; and here is the exercise of his understanding. But it is very questionable whether he shall be able to reach it. The current seems to carry him in another direction; yet there is hope; it is taking another turn. He is gradually approaching the instrument of his safety; and now there is hope, mingled with his agony; he comes nearer and nearer; his friends cry "courage," and see with what energy he seizes the preserver of his life. There was heart in that grasp. But not more so than when the poor trembling sinner lays hold of Christ. He is pointed to the Cross, but the current of his feelings drives him past it. He weeps and mourns, he groans and prays; his friends reason and encourage; the spirit operates; hope springs up; immediately the direction of the stream is changed, he gets nearer every moment; he looks, weeps, cries, "Save, for Thy name's sake"; and in an agony—with all his heart—and with all the affections and powers of his soul, he grasps the Saviour."—Handbook to Scripture Doctrines.

336. John 3.16.

One cold, wintry night a poor Irish boy stood in the streets of Dublin—a little city Arab, homeless, houseless, friendless. He had taken to bad courses, and had become an associate of thieves who were leading him on the broad road to destruction. That very night they had planned to commit a burglary, and had appointed him to meet them in a certain street, at a certain hour. As he stood there waiting, shivering and cold, a hand was laid upon his shoulder. It was very dark; he could see only a tall form standing by him, and he trembled with fear, but a kindly voice said: "Boy, what are you doing here at this time of night? Such as you have no business in the streets at so late an hour. Go home, and go to bed."

"I have no home, and no bed to go to."

"That's very sad, poor fellow. Would you go to a home and to a bed if I provided one?"

"That would I sharp!" replied the boy.

"Well, in —— street and number —— you will find a bed." Before he could add more the lad had started off.

"Stop!" said the voice. "How are you going to get in? You need a pass. No one can get in there without a pass. Here is one for you. Can you read?"

"No, sir."

"Well, remember that the pass is John 3.16. There, that's something that will do you good."

Joyfully the lad rushed off, repeating his lesson, and soon found himself in the street and at the number indicated, before a pair of large iron gates. Then his heart failed him, they looked so grand. How could he get in there? Timidly he rang the bell. The night porter opened the door and in a gruff voice asked, "Who's there?"

"Me, sir. Please, sir, I'm 'John Three Sixteen,'" in very trembling tones.

"All right; in with you; that's the pass."

And in the boy went.

He was soon in a nice, warm bed, and between sheets such as he had never seen before. As he curled himself up to go to sleep, he thought, "This is a lucky name. I'll stick to it." The next morning he was given a bowl of hot bread and milk, before being sent out into the street (for this home was only for the night). He wandered on and on, fearful of meeting his old companions, thinking over his new name, when, heedlessly crossing a crowded thoroughfare, he was run over.

A crowd gathered, the unconscious form was placed on a shutter and carried to the nearest hospital. After his injuries had been attended to, he was carried into the accident ward. In a short time his sufferings brought on fever and delirium. Then was heard in ringing tones and oft-repeated, "John 3.16. John 3.16. It was to do me good, and so it has."

Consciousness returned, and the poor little fellow gazed around him. How vast the room looked, and how quiet it was! Where was he? Presently a voice from the next bed said: "John Three Sixteen, how are you to-day?"

"Why, how do you know my new name?"

"Know it! You've never ceased with your 'John Three Sixteen,' and I for one say 'Blessed Three Sixteen.'"

This sounded strange to the little lad's ears. To be called "Blessed," he for whom no one cared!

"And don't you know where it comes from? It's from the Bible."

"The Bible! What's that?"

The poor little waif had never heard of the Bible. "Read it to me," he said; and as the words fell on his ear he muttered, "That's beautiful! It's all about love, and not a home for a night, but a home for always." He soon learned the text saying, "I've not only got a new name, but something to it!" This was indeed a joy.

Our little friend recovered. For a long time John 3.16 was his favourite text. God blessed his simple faith, friends were raised up to him, and he was placed at school. Now he is an earnest, hearty worker for the Master.—Condensed from a Tract.

337. I am Healed.

Henry Moorhouse, the celebrated English evangelist, who died while quite young, was once a guest in the home of some friends of his. One evening, while he was preparing his sermon, a child of the household came into the room where he was sitting, and said, "Mr. Moorhouse, I want to be a Christian." "Well," he said, "you may be, for it is very easy." He asked her to turn to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and to read the fourth and fifth verses, making them personal where the pronouns "we" and "our" occur. She did so and read them this way, "Surely He hath borne my griefs, and carried my sorrows, yet I did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for my transgressions, He was bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon Him, and with His stripes——" and as she came to this part she suddenly stopped, her eyes filled with tears, and Moorhouse said, "Read on!" Then she read, "I am healed." "It is just as easy as that," said the evangelist, and the child went away believing. —Christian Herald.

338. Faith in Christ.

I believe in a physician when I put my case into that physician's hands, and trust him to cure me. I believe in a lawyer when I leave my case in his hands, and trust him to plead for me. I believe in a banker when I put money into his hands, and allow him to keep it on my behalf. I believe in my Saviour when I take Him to be my Saviour, when I put my helpless case into His hands, and trust Him to do what I cannot do for myself —save me from my sin. Have you done so? You believe there is such a person as Jesus, and that He is the sinner's Saviour. You do well; but that is only a partial and incomplete faith. To believe that a certain doctor exists and has a large practice is not to believe personally in that doctor. True faith contains a moral as well as an intellectual element, and when the former is wanting the latter can avail but little. Do you repose your moral confidence in Him, as being to you the Saviour that you need, as one whose character and office are congruous to the wants of your nature? You are a sinner, He represents Himself as Saviour. You are a lost one, He has died to find you. You are dead, He presents Himself as the Resurrection and the Life. The point is: Do you take Him by faith to be what He reveals Himself to be? That is believing on Him. If you can say in your heart, "Yes, I believe in Him," then the Holy Spirit of God can no longer convict you of sin. All your sins were laid on the Lamb of God, who bore the sin of the world. There is no longer a case against you; the summons is dismissed. There is no condemnation; you are pronounced acquitted and accepted in the Beloved.—W. T. Aitken, M.A.

FAITH IN MEN.

339. Never Despair of Any Man!

Some years ago a vase hermetically sealed was found in a mummy-pit in Egypt, by the English traveler Wilkinson, who sent it to the British museum. The librarian there, having unfortunately broken it, discovered in it a few grains of wheat and one or two peas, old, wrinkled and hard as stone. The peas were planted carefully under glass on the 4th of June, 1844, and at the end of thirty days these old seeds were seen to spring up into new life. They had been buried probably about three thousand years ago, perhaps in the time of Moses, and had slept all that long time, apparently dead, yet still living in the dust of the tomb.—Professor Gaussen.

340. All Souls Precious.

An eminent surgeon was one day sent for by the Cardinal Du Bois, Prime Minister of France, to perform a very serious operation upon him. The Cardinal, on seeing him enter the room, said to him, "You must not expect to treat me in the same rough manner that you treat the more miserable wretches at your hospital." "My lord," replied the surgeon, with great dignity, "every one of those miserable wretches, as your eminence is pleased to call them, is a Prime Minister in my eyes, for each is one of God's poor."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

341. Seeing the Saint in the Sinner.

As the eye of the cunning lapidary detects in the rugged pebble, just digged from the mine, the polished diamond that shall sparkle in the diadem of a king; or as the sculptor in the rough block of marble, newly hewn from the quarry, beholds the statue of perfect grace and beauty which is latent there, and waiting but the touch of his hand,—so He who sees all, and the end from the beginning, sees oftentimes greater wonders than these. He sees the saint in the sinner, the saint that shall be in the sinner that is; the wheat in the tare, Paul in Saul, Matthew in the publican, Peter in Simon. — Archbishop Trench.

"Thus with something of the seer
Must the moral pioneer.
From the future borrow;
Clothe the waste with dreams of grain,
And on the midnight sky of rain
Paint the golden morrow."
—Whittier's "Barclay of Ury."

342. Making Pictures.

Bishop Thoburn tells a beautiful story about a picture of his dead child. It seemed a very imperfect photograph, so blurred that scarcely a trace of the loved features could be seen in it. But one day he took the picture to a photographer, and asked him if he could do anything to improve it. In three weeks the bishop returned, and, as he saw the picture in its frame on the wall, he was startled. It seemed as if his child were living again before him. The image had been in the old picture, but was concealed beneath the blurs and mists that were there also. The artist, however, had brought it out in strong, living beauty, until it was like life in its tender charm.

In every true disciple of Christ there is the image of the Master. It may be very dim. Its features are overlaid by blurs and blemishes, and are almost unrecognizable by human eyes. It is the work of Christ in our lives to bring out this likeness more and more clearly, until at last it shines in undimmed beauty. This is what Christ is doing in many of His ways with us.—J. R. Miller.

343. Hope for the Hopeless.

One night recently when I was crossing the Atlantic, an officer of our boat told me that we had just passed over the spot where the *Titanic* went down. And I thought of all that life and wreckage beyond the power of man to recover and redeem. And I thought of the great bed of the deep sea, with all its held treasure, too far down for man to reach and restore. "Too far down!" And then I thought of all the human wreckage engulfed and sunk in oceanic depths of nameless sin. Too far gone! For what? Too far down! For what? Not too far down for the love of God! Listen to this: "He descended into hell," and He will descend again if you are there. "If I make my bed in hell, thou art there." "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "He bore our sin"; then He got beneath it; down to it and beneath it; and there is no human wreckage lying in the ooze of the deepest sea of iniquity that His deep love cannot reach and redeem. What a Gospel! However far down, God's love can get beneath it!—J. H. Jowett.

344. Discovering the Human Soul.

I have heard that one of the diamond-fields of South Africa was discovered in this wise: A traveler one day entered the valley and drew near to a settler's door, at which a boy was amusing himself by throwing stones. One of the stones fell at the stranger's feet, who picked it up and was in the act of laughingly returning it, when something flashed from it which stopped his hand and made his heart beat fast. It was a diamond. The child was playing with it as a common stone; the peasant's foot had spurned it; the cart-wheel had crushed it; till the man who knew saw it and recognized its value. Was it not the same careless treatment the soul was receiving when Jesus arrived in the world and discovered it? A harlot's soul, sunk in the mud and filth of iniquity! why a Pharisee would not stain his fingers to find it. A child's soul! the scribes used to discuss in their schools whether or not a child had a soul at all.—J. Stalker, D.D.

345. Unsuspected Values.

Thirty years ago a South African ostrich-hunter named O'Reilly sought shelter one winter's evening at a solitary farmhouse near the banks of the Orange River. As he entered he overheard a dispute between the children, which was being settled by their mother. While playing on the banks of the river close by, they had picked up some pretty pebbles, and it was the possession of one of these which gave rise to the quarrel. It shone and sparkled by candle light, and was so unlike any other stone they had ever seen that the mother made an arrangement with O'Reilly that he should try to sell it at Graham's Town, and then share the profits with her. The stone proved to be a magnificent diamond, of twenty-one and a quarter carats, which O'Reilly sold for five hundred pounds. On the site of this farmhouse now stands the prosperous little town felicitously named Hopetown. A few months later a Hottentot came wandering towards the same place with a brilliant stone, which he offered for sale to a certain Boer, who gave him what he asked for it—two hundred pounds in money and two hundred pounds worth of goods. Next day the astute Dutch farmer parted with his bargain for twelve thousand pounds in gold, bought a larger piece of land and troubled himself about diamonds no more. This diamond was the famous eighty-three carat "Star of South Africa," and is now known as the "Dudley," as it afterwards became the property of the Countess of Dudley. It is now worth about fifty thousand pounds.—English Illustrated Magazine.

346. Give a Word of Hope.

I was in Alaska when the S.S. *Islander* went down off Douglass Island. Mr. Simpson, the chief steward, said he had floated about on a piece of broken spar for hours until he was so chilled and benumbed with cold that he finally lost all hope and saw his doom sealed—death in that ice-water, away from home and loved ones. When just at this moment of awful agony of heart, a light pierced the darkness, the splash of oars was heard, and a voice cried out: "There is Simpson, we must save him; brace up, old man, we will save you." Mr. Simpson said that it sent fire and energy to his farthest extremities, and soon a friendly hand reached out and he was safe in the life-boat.

Tell the man in despair that there is hope.—French Oliver.

347. Traces of God's Image.

There is a story in English history of a child of one of our noble houses who, in the last century, was stolen from his house by a sweep. The parents spared no expense or trouble in their search for him, but in vain. A few years later the lad happened to be sent by the master into whose hands he had then passed to sweep the chimneys in the very house from which he had been stolen while too young to remember it. The little fellow had been sweeping the chimney of one of the bedrooms, and fatigued with the exhausting labour to which so many lads, by the cruel custom of those times were bound, he quite forgot where he was, and flinging himself upon the clean bed dropped off to sleep. The lady of the house happened to enter the room. At first she looked in disgust and anger at the filthy black object that was soiling her counterpane. But all at once something in the expression of the little dirty face, or some familiar pose of the languid limbs, drew her nearer with a sudden inspiration, and in a moment she had clasped once more in her motherly arms her long-lost boy.—H. W. Horwill.

348. Never Give Up!

A long time ago an old woman tripped and fell from the top of a stone stairway in Boston as she was coming out of the police station. They called the patrol and carried her to the hospital and the doctor examining her said to the nurse, "She will not live more than a day." And when the nurse had won her confidence the old woman said, "I have traveled from California, stopping at every city of importance between San Francisco and Boston, visiting two places always—the police station and the hospital. My boy went away from me and did not tell me where he was going, so I have sold all my property and made this journey to seek him out. Some day," she said, "he may come into this hospital, and if he does tell him that there were two who never gave him up." When the night came and the doctor standing beside her said, "It is now but a question of a few minutes," the nurse bent over her to say, "Tell me the names of the two and I will tell your son if I see him." With trembling lips and eyes overflowing with tears she said, "Tell him that the two were God and his mother," and she was gone.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

349. Two Faithful Friends.

In Boston some two years ago, an old withered, broken-down woman was seen strangely peering in at the saloon doors. When they were being closed, she was there to examine the faces of those drinkers who were coming out. Next day she would be in the wards of the hospital, through the kindness of the nurses, examining every white pinched face that lay on the pillow of suffering. From the hospital she would go to the police courts, and as the cells with their trap-doors emptied the criminals up to be examined and judged, she would examine every young man who came up. Day after day, day after day, till the saloon-keepers, and nurses, and policemen, took it as a matter of course. Often they would wonder whom the poor creature was searching for, but she would never say. At last a nurse in the hospital got her confidence, and she asked, "Whom are you seeking?" "Oh, I have been seeking my boy. I have been seeking him for twenty years. I have gone through the states for twenty years. I have been at all the prison doors, at all the saloon doors, and at all the hospitals, but I have never seen him; but will you tell him—some day he may be brought to this hospital, and I feel that I must soon give it up,—will you tell him that two never flung him aside? Two remained faithful to him to the end?" "Yes, I will tell him." "You have his name?" "Yes, I have his name." "Ah, well, tell him that God and his mother remained true to him to the very last. Tell him that God and his mother for twenty years have walked the American cities in search of him; God and I have been looking for him." "Yes, I will tell him." She staggered out to the street, but the policeman brought her back. She seemed dazed and raving. She said, "I will have to give up. For twenty years I have looked for my boy," and as she looked up into the eyes of the policeman, who in the rough garb of the law had a tender heart, she said, "If my boy comes to Boston, and he may likely come this way, will you tell him that two never cast him off, that two friends kept close to him for twenty years?" "Who are they?" "Listen, oh, just bend down, tell him this, that God and his mother never cast him off." "Yes," said the policeman, "I will tell him if he comes to Boston."

Ah, God is love. He has come to Glasgow with you, away from the country home, away from the village yonder, from Perthshire, from Forfarshire, from Argyllshire, from Fifeshire, from away up in Rosshire, from the Highland hills, God has been looking for you. God was looking for Saul; and for you. He wishes to lift you away from spending the best of your years in toil.—John Robertson.

350. Respected and Trusted.

In those early days Jerry McAuley set an inestimable value upon every token of trust in him. He had been so long hunted and dogged and accustomed to the thought that he was an outcast and outlaw whom nobody would trust out of sight with the value of a cent, that it was a new and sweet experience to him to be trusted.

What a moral invigorator a little timely confidence and reliance on his honour was to him, and may be to others in like circumstances, as illustrated in one or two incidents, was often referred to in his public testimonies. He used to say, after telling what a miserable wretch, and moral and physical wreck he was before Jesus picked him up. "Just look at me now" (holding open his coat and making a comical gesture of looking himself over). "I have everything a man could wear. I have plenty to eat, a good home and good clothes, and I am respected and trusted. Think of Jerry McAuley, the biggest bum that used to hang out around this ward, turned into a respectable citizen. Why, a few years ago, if a man with five dollars in his pocket met me coming down the street, he'd cross over on the other side, and lucky for him, too; but now I go downtown, walk into a big banking-house, take an armchair, put up one leg over the other, and talk with the boss as big as life; and they don't set any detectives to watch me either, or send for a policeman to run me out. This is what Jesus has done for me—made a man of me; and He will do it for you, too, if you will let Him."—R. M. Offord.

FEAR.

351. Afraid of God.

Dr. Arnot tells us of a poor woman in great distress because she could not pay her rent. She was expecting the officer to seize her goods. Her pastor heard of her trouble, and went to her house with the money for her rent. He knocked, but could not get an answer. He went to different doors and windows, so eager was he to help her, but he received no response. At last he was compelled to go away, carrying the money back with him. The good woman thought it was the officer seeking entrance to carry away her goods, and she had tightly barred every door and window, and gave no heed to the knocking. Many people imagine that Christ comes as an enemy to put a yoke upon their necks to add to their burdens, and they shut him out. If they knew what blessings He brings in His hands, they would open gladly.—H. F. Sayles.

352. Fear of Man Illustrated.

Burgomeister Guericke constructed a gigantic barometer with a tube thirty feet in height, part of which projected above the roof of his house at Magdeburg. The index was the figure of a man, who, in fair weather, was seen standing full size above the roof; but, when a storm was brewing, he cautiously withdrew for security and shelter. Antitype of religionists and politicians! When the sun shines brightly, and the breezes scarcely breathe across the landscape, how erect and bold they look! But let the clouds gather, and the thunders mutter, and what a drawing-in of diminished heads! O rare, satirical Burgomeister! you must have had an alderman's experience!—Dr. W. F. Warren.

353. Be Not Afraid.

On the West Coast I stood one day on the cliffs whilst a man pointed out a reef of rocks about which the wild seas foamed, and told me of an Austrian barque that in some fierce storm had struck upon the rocks, indeed was flung up on them by some huge sea. The rocket apparatus was on the spot and fired the rocket right over the ship, so that the rope was made fast in the rigging. Instantly every sailor on the ship rushed below, and not a man was to be seen. There was the rope attached, and there hung the board in half-a-dozen languages directing as to its use. They knew that the seas would rend the ship to pieces very soon and all must perish. At last this man could stand it no longer, and getting into the buoy he went down to the ship, and in at the forecastle he flung the painted board. A score of frightened faces looked up in terror at him. They took the board and read it; hastily they explained it to one another, and crept forth wondering. Then one, then another, availed himself of the apparatus, until all were safely on the shore; and, overwhelmed with gratitude, they fell on the necks of their deliverers and wept and kissed them in their great joy. "We thought you wanted to shoot and kill us," they explained in their broken English.

—M. G. Pearse.

354. Conquering Fear.

In the Manchester Art Gallery there is a famous picture by Briton Riviere, entitled "In Manus Tuas, Domine!" of which the artist says: "I have failed indeed if the story does not carry some lesson to ourselves to-day, whatever be our doubts or fears." The message it conveys is the victory of faith. The picture represents a fair-haired young knight clad in armour, seated upon a white charger whose downcast head, quivering nostrils and quivering limbs denote intense fear. At the charger's feet there crouch three bloodhounds, also gazing before them in terror. Behind the knight is the forest glade through which he has passed, rich in green sward and sun-kissed paths, but the path in front is full of gloom and unknown terrors. In his fear the knight is at one with the trembling brutes, but he has that within him which raises him above them and gives him aid. It is faith. Lifting his sword before his face, it forms itself into a cross. "Into Thy hands, O Lord," he says, and goes forward. He conquers fear by faith, and by it, "though he walk through the valley of the shadow, he will fear no evil."—J. Burns.

355. Sinner Afraid of God.

I once met a little boy in Wales, crying bitterly at his father's door, afraid to go in. I asked him what was the matter. He told me that his mother had sent him out clean in the morning, but that he had got into the water, and made his clothes dirty. So he feared to go in, because his father would punish him. We have soiled out characters by sin, and therefore is it that we fear death—dread the meeting with our Father.—Thomas Jones.

FEELINGS.

356. Hopeless Without Religious Emotion.

A priest had occasion once to interview a great doctor about the terrible case of a woman of high social position who had become the slave of drink. The doctor was a man of great force and ability, and of unwearying devotion; but he was what would be called a sceptic and a materialist. The priest asked if the case was hopeless; the great doctor shrugged his shoulders. "Yes," he said, "pathologically speaking, it is hopeless; there may be periods of recovery, but the course that the case will normally run will be a series of relapses, each more serious and of longer duration than the last." "Is there no chance of recovery on any line that you could suggest?" said the priest. The two looked at each other, both good men and true. "Well," said the doctor after a pause, "this is more in your line than mine; the only possible chance lies in the will, and that can only be touched through an emotion. I have seen a religious emotion successful where everything else failed." The priest smiled and said: "I suppose that would seem to you a species of delusion? You would not admit that there was any reality behind it?" "Yes," said the doctor, "a certain reality, no doubt; the emotional processes are at present somewhat obscure from the scientific point of view; it is a forlorn hope." "Yes," said the priest, "and it is thus the kind of task for which I and those of my calling feel bound to volunteer."—A. C. Benson.

357. Emotion and Christianity.

To the Editor of *The Sun*—Sir: In your editorial on the "Glory of the Christian Year," you say the idealism of Christianity still stirs the religious emotions of Christendom.

Now, I don't think I know just what that means, but somehow it reminds me that years ago when I was fast becoming a drunkard I used to attend services at a church in Newark, just to hear a lady sing, and as she sang she must have stirred the religious emotions in me, for I always felt very pious, and "mine eyes became a very fountain of tears." Could I have remained under that spell I don't believe I could have done an evil thing; but when I got out on the street again I made for the nearest saloon, every time, and spent the next hour or more filling myself with beer, which also must have stirred my religious emotions, for I remember on one of these occasions of quarreling with the barkeeper because he did not believe in God.

Whether this illustrates your point or not I don't know, but it shows how a man may have religious emotions, yet not be a Christian.

Twenty-three years ago to-night, and some years after attending the church meeting referred to, and after years of hard drinking and evil courses generally, I attended a little Woman's Christian Temperance Union meeting in Newark, and there without any religious emotions, but with an awful sense of my exceeding sinfulness, I surrendered to Jesus Christ, and a spirit was put within me that has been with me ever since, and I have been as free from my old way of living as though I had never lived at all. "Old things have passed away and behold all things have become new."

The idealism of Christianity is Jesus Christ and eternal life.—F. M. Palmatier.

358. Removing Blemishes.

You may recall the story of Herkomer, born in the Black Forest, the son of a simple wood-chopper. He afterward rose to fame and established his studio in London and brought his father there to be with him. The old man became very fond of moulding clay and would spend most of his time at it, and really became quite an artist along that line. But as he grew older and his eye lost something of the keenness of its vision, and his hand something of its skill, the old gentleman became heavy hearted, like a man who thinks his best days are gone, and he would go upstairs at the close of the day's work with sad heart. Herkomer, the unrivalled artist in clay, noticed it all, and many times when the old man had gone upstairs he would slip into the studio and take the work his old father had left with the marks of deficiency and failure on it, and with his own wonderful touch he would make it as fair as the genius of man could make it. And in the morning when the old man would come down and look on the work he had left the night before, disappointed with its deficiencies, he would hold it up to the light and rub his eyes and exclaim: "Why, I can do it as well as I ever could!"

Just that God can bring to pass in your life. "I can do it as well as I ever did!" Nay, nay, something better than that, "I can do it better than ever I did; I can be the pure man I once was, or better than that, the man I have always longed to be."—William E. Biederwolf.

359. Loss of Energy.

We regret the loss of energy in Niagara, but the loss of precious energy in the unavailing stream of feeling which passes away in imaginative moods is infinitely worse. If we could harness the Niagara of human sympathy, and set it to work in educating the ignorant, in helping the helpless, in nursing the sick, in reclaiming the fallen, what gracious revolutions would be worked in a day! Feeling is worth nothing if it bear no tangible fruit. Our Master wept, but He also bled. "He that goeth forth weeping," not he that stays at home weeping, "shall doubtless come again, bringing his sheaves with him."—W. L. Watkinson.

360. Personal Experience.

I once met face to face in personal intercourse one of those masters whose bodies the tomb has claimed for more than four hundred years. I had been preparing by study, by the guidance of eminent men, by observation in various cities and numerous galleries, for exactly such an event. I had at length reached Rome, the home of Christian art. I was anxious to know if art was actually a language which I could translate. I had taken other people's hearsay and opinion and judgment long enough. I started out to see for myself whether I could find any one work of art that, without introduction or recommendation, would speak to me with power. I wandered into the Vatican, I roamed through the halls of statuary, and then among the paintings. Presently I entered a room in which were three large pieces of canvas. At two of these I cast a hurried glance, but something in the central canvas fixed my attention. It was a picture of the Transfiguration. It was the first painting of which I could be sure that the work itself, and not its reputation, influenced me. Dozens of tourists entered the room, talked, criticized, made entries in notebooks, and passed on, while I was detained by an invisible power. For an hour I was learning from that painter the glories of the Transfiguration Mount. All else in the picture was lifeless; but the face of Christ, shining as the sun, radiant with the nearly completed triumph of a finished redemption, resplendent with "beatitude past utterance," profoundly moved me. The tears started unbidden; the heart beat faster. The same awe seemed to bow me which prostrated the witnessing disciples.

Then I turned away to learn who

it was that had so moved my heart. I found that I had been in converse with Raphael. I had met him in the midst of his last earthly work, while he was hastening to leave his supreme thought with the world before death overtook him. With his vision of the transfigured Christ he had taught me for an hour as eloquently as he had ever thrilled disciples who knew him in the body.

Shall I ever again go to another's opinion, or to a printed book, or to an æsthetic dogma, to learn whether Raphael is a power, whether Raphael is great, whether Raphael is a master? I know it for myself; I have seen it and felt it. He grasped me, lifted me, swayed me.

The whole life of Christ, as written in the Scriptures, is the Holy Spirit's canvas. If we go to it sympathetically, the Spirit of God will glorify Himself in us. He will cause us to see and feel and know the facts of spiritual life. It is our right to have just as authentic evidence that the grace of God changes the heart, as stands in the records of the apostles. It is given us to have a spiritual insight for ourselves, and to be able to testify, not that there is an old chronicle which reports that a Pharisee of Tarsus was spiritually blind and somehow gained spiritual eyesight, but to testify that we were blind, yet now see. It is our privilege to know that the spirit of Christ is the the vital power of our spiritual natures, and from immediate knowledge to testify of its operation. There is no necessity laid upon us to be satisfied with repeating what Christ has said will prove true. It is ours to experience the truth and to preach Christ from personal verification.

—Rev. Albion W. Small.

361. Fickle Feeling.

A man in a large city desiring to visit the zoological park, boarded a crowded car marked "Zoo." He paid his fare and began reading his paper, feeling like he was going to the Zoo. Presently the passengers began leaving the car, and when there were but two others besides himself in the car he began wondering if the Zoo was not open. Finally the car stopped and seeing the conductor turning the trolley pole, he looked about but saw nothing that resembled a park. "Conductor," said he, "doesn't this car go to the Zoo?" "Yes, sir, it certainly does," replied the obliging conductor, "but it is just nine miles from here." He was six miles farther from the park than when he boarded the car. All the while he had been feeling like he was going to the Zoo, but was going directly from it. He arose, turned his seat, again paid his fare, and then knew that he was going to the Zoo. Brother, you can not feel your way to Heaven. Do not trust your fickle feeling, trust Jesus.—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

FORMALISM.

362. Exterior Adornment Insufficient.

Those who adorn only the exterior, but neglect the inner man, are like the Egyptian temples, which present every kind of decoration upon the outside, but contain within, in place of a deity, a cat, a crocodile, or some other vile animal.—"Clement of Alexandria."

363. Form Without Power.

Some years ago the captain of a Greenland whaling vessel found himself at night surrounded by icebergs and "lay-to" till the morning, expecting every moment to be ground to pieces. As the morning dawned he sighted a ship at no great distance. Getting into a boat with some of his men he carefully picked his way through the lanes of open ice towards the mysterious-looking craft. Coming alongside he hailed the vessel with a loud, "Ship ahoy!" but there was no response. He looked through the porthole and saw a man, evidently the captain, sitting at a table as if writing in a log-book. He again hailed the vessel, but the figure moved not. It was dead and frozen. On examination the sailors were found, some frozen among the hammocks, others in the cabin. From the last entry in the log-book it appeared this vessel had been drifting about the Arctic seas for thirteen years—a floating sepulchre, manned by a frozen crew. And there are souls to-day who have refused the Divine offer of life, forsaken the centres where they were warmed with hallowed influences, and drifted into the chilling regions of Arctic darkness and frost. Many of these have certain appearances of Christian life, and a name to live.—Christian Journal.

364. Yacht Which Never Sails.

There lives in Great Britain an American who is very rich and very eccentric. One of his eccentricities is that he resides in a beautiful steam-yacht moored fast in the tideway off Brightlingsea, in the mouth of the Colne River. For twelve years this Mr. Bayard Brown has lived thus. Regular watches are kept on board by a full crew of twenty-one men. There are the regular officers, a captain and mates, sailors, ordinary seamen, two firemen, a cook and a steward. An engine provides power for the electric lights. The yacht's sails are furled, her compass and engine-room telegraph covered in canvas. Year after year she has lain thus, always in perfect order, ready to up-anchor and away, and yet never moving. Her engines are regularly overhauled, her hull is scraped and cleaned by divers, her brass-work is polished and paint renewed; but she has never moved since the day Bayard Brown brought her to her present anchorage.

It seems to me that the Church is a good deal like that to-day.—L. A. Banks.

365. Formalism in Religion.

A gentleman once entered a hall with his son. They saw a number of well-dressed people—some of them standing together in groups, others apart; some sitting in various postures. The son's attention was fixed by a pleasant-looking gentleman, somewhat gaudily dressed. He said: "Father, who is that gentleman? He seems a mild, pleasant-looking person; but what a singular dress he wears! Who is he?" "Ask the gentleman who stands near you," said the father. "If you please, sir, can you inform me who that gentleman opposite is?" No answer. The boy thinks it strange. At last the father tells him: "My son, those are only wax figures; there is no life in them; they are all outside, very fair to look at, but there is no soul, no life; they are outside and nothing else." So it is with those who have no internal religion.—Dictionary of Illustrations.

366. Fatal Formality.

A pastor writes: When I was a young man and serving my first charge in 1882, I became acquainted with a family, where the wife and two children were Christians, but the husband and one son were not. The father was not a wicked man, went frequently to church, gave liberally, admitted the need of a new birth, and was always ready to welcome and entertain in his beautiful country home, and to talk about his own neglect. He promised me time and again that he would soon confess Christ before men, but failed, and when dealt with would say: "I have not been baptized and am ashamed to be now, after neglecting it so long."

His eldest son was wayward, "sowing his wild oats," and going from bad to worse, little dreaming that the harvest would be reaped so soon. One morning a ring was heard at my door, and on opening, a messenger hastily said: "Albert Snyder was instantly killed in a gravel pit, and you are to preach the funeral." At the appointed time I went to the home and was met by the father. Oh! what a change! Would to God I could have been spared from witnessing the agony so plainly shown! The few hours of bereavement had added years to him. Tearfully he asked if I thought his son was lost. I replied: "He is in the hands of God who is too wise to err, and too good to deal unjustly." He threw himself upon a bed and shook and wept like a child. He said: "My son is lost, lost because his father influenced him to live a Christless life; lost to accuse me in the judgment as the means of his damnation." He continued to reproach himself, and say: "Oh, that he might have lived two weeks longer, that I might have given to him the example of a Christian father!" I asked him whether he thought he would really have confessed Christ within two weeks, if this calamity had not come. "No! No!" said he, "Satan made me a coward, would not let me do my duty. It is plain to me now, what I could not see before, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'" Thus he raved, wept, repented, and again cursed his folly. To all promises of peace for salvation he replied: "They are not for a coward like me; after leading my child to hell, shall I try to escape it myself?" In less than two weeks he was taken to a madhouse, where his awful ravings continued for nearly two years, when death came to his release.—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

367. Cross-Bearer of Alsace.

The methods in which the common people, prior to the Reformation in the sixteenth century, endeavored to expiate their sins by self-imposed penances, and the need they had of a new declaration of the gospel, the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus, receive a striking illustration from the well authenticated story of the Cross-bearer of Alsace.

This unhappy man, who lived during the middle part of the last century, dwelt alone in a little hut built of the trunks of trees, among the Alsatian mountains. To expiate, as it was generally supposed, some great crime, the nature of which, however, was never known, he consecrated his life to a series of pilgrimages, bearing upon his shoulders an immense wooden cross, and wearing on his feet a pair of gigantic and cumbersome wooden shoes. The latter are preserved as relics in the town hall at Kaisersberg to the present day. Neither his name nor his country has ever been known; for he never allowed himself to speak to any one; but there is a tradition among the peasantry that he was a member of the family of Pope Leo IX. As of his birth, so of his death little is known—nothing indeed, except that one day his body was found in the forest, apparently crushed beneath the weight of the cross which he had been carrying. Such an instance of ostentatious and useless penance, undertaken doubtless by a sincere though misguided enthusiast, in supposed compliance with the command to take up the cross and follow Christ, affords a striking illustration of the saying of Paul—"the letter killeth." Nor is it possible to read such an account without a new sense of thankfulness for that gospel of Christ whose simple message to us is: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."—The Christian Weekly.

368. Deceptive Form.

On the farm of Manorlees, in Fifeshire, and in the house of Mr. Alexander Gibson, a large and very tempting ham hung from one of the rafters running across the ceiling. In the same house there was a rat, whose taste lay strongly in the direction of the ham, and this rat, with rare instinct, gnawed a hole in the woodwork directly over the tempting morsel, and, descending, ate itself into the inside of it. How long the excavating went on is not known, but one day the housewife found it necessary to commence operations on the ham, when, on lifting it down, out bolted the depredator. The ham was a perfect shell, skin and bone only remaining to show its form. The animal, after feeding sumptuously, had commenced to build a nest inside. This anecdote is not simply amusing; it serves well to illustrate the operation of secret sin, eating away our spiritual life till nothing remains but a deceptive form of godliness—the mere rind and shell of religion.—Christian Herald.

369. Love of Fame Rebuked.

There was one Michael Fenwick who travelled with Wesley as a sort of groom, nurse, and occasional exhorter. The good man was vain enough to complain, one day, that his name was never inserted in Wesley's published "Journals." In the next number of the "Journals," he found his name in a connection that probably did not serve to increase his vanity. "I left Epworth," wrote Wesley, "with great satisfaction, and about one, preached at Clayworth. I think none were unmoved but Michael Fenwick, who fell asleep under an adjoining hayrick."—Dr. Haven.

370. Marble Bust and Living Christ.

Professor Phelps tells of a burglar who rifled an unoccupied dwelling by the seaside. He ransacked the rooms, and heaped his plunder in the parlor. There were evidences that here he sat down to rest. On a bracket in a corner stood a marble bust of Guido's Ecce Homo — Christ crowned with thorns. The guilty man had taken it in his hands and examined it—it bore the marks of his fingers—but he replaced it with its face turned to the wall, as if he would not have even the sightless eyes of the marble Saviour look upon his deeds of infamy.—E. Morgan.

371. Constancy in Religion.

I have read of a waterfall in a nobleman's garden, beautiful in its construction, but the water was never turned on unless his lordship was there. That is like much of the religion existing in the present age. It is turned on only when there is some one to see and applaud. Our service must not be kept for mere effect and display.—R. Venting.

372. Copying Imperfections.

A gentleman had a lovely Chinese plaque with curious raised figures upon it. One day it fell from the wall on which it was hung, and was cracked right across the middle. Soon after, the gentleman sent to China for six more of these valuable plates, and to ensure an exact match, sent his broken plate as a copy. To his intense astonishment, when six months later he received the six plates, and his injured one, he found the Chinese had so faithfully followed his copy, that each new one had a crack right across it. If we imitate even the best of men, we are apt to copy their imperfections, but if we follow Jesus and take Him as our example, we are sure of a perfect pattern.—Sunday At Home.

373. Picture Our Age Is Painting.

I can never forget my first sight of Paul Veronese's "Marriage at Cana," in the "Salle Carre" of the Louvre, in Paris. It has all that marvellous mellow richness which characterizes the Venetian School. The composition is equally wonderful. Eleanor of Austria, Queen of France, is there. Francis the First is there. Mary of England is there. The Sultan Solyman is there. The Emperor Charles is there. It is a scene of pomp and splendour, such as we read of occasionally on the pages of history. After looking at it for a time, it suddenly occurred to me to ask: "How about the Christ?" He is the man with the artificial halo about His head. Take that halo from the picture, and you would scarcely know that He was there, buried as He is under all this magnificence. He is not remarkable, as in some paintings, for the light of love that shines in His eyes. He is distinguished simply by a formal halo.

Is not this the sort of picture our age is painting? When we have crowded in all the magnificence and splendour possible, if we admit the Christ at all it is not the Christ of the Gospels, so severe in His demands of sacrifice, so regal in His moral authority, so insistent in His teachings of service, but a purely formal guest, distinguished from other men by the halo of a creed, whose rule over the soul has been lost, while we were "busy here and there."—Rev. G. H. Ferris.

374. Hidden Need.

In front of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston stands a bronze statue of an American Indian on horseback. Without saddle or spur he bestrides the beast, in apparent oblivion of his surroundings. His frame is wiry but spare and tense. He spreads his naked arms outward with palms upward in a gesture of prayer, and his face and chest strain beseechingly but mutely towards a brazen, silent sky. There is a mighty prayer there for some hidden need.

It is no necessity of food or drink or climate that tortures the heart and wrings the breast of that dusky aborigine. Beneath him his well-nourished, sleek pony muses contentedly, revealing no consciousness of want. And that very difference between rider and ridden marks an eternal boundary between brute and soul. Food, drink, and sunshine may satisfy the horse, but not the man, if he really be a man.—Willard Scott.

375. Without Christ.

You cannot be like that old Duke of Northumberland who, when he was told that he was dying, like the old pagan that he was, called for his armour. It was given to him, and, in his weakness, he raised himself in his bed, and the hard steel clasps were fastened about him; and as the sweat of extreme weakness came out on his brow, he asked for his lance, and the lance that had carried his colours in a hundred battles was put into his hand; and the valiant old warrior faced the last enemy with lance in rest. It was a poor stage act. Death laughed at the lance and at the armour.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

376. Form Without Power.

Representative Norris, of Nebraska, was on a street-car one Sunday morning when there entered a white-haired woman, a man of about thirty and a well-dressed young woman. The conversation soon made it apparent that the young man and his mother were from a farm, and that they were visiting Washington for the first time. He was starting home, leaving her to visit longer with the young woman, who was her daughter. When the brother arose a little later to say good-bye at the point where he was to leave the car, his mother threw her arms around his neck, and stood for some moments delivering a motherly message, while the conductor waited patiently with his hand on the bell-cord. Embarrassed, the son still held his arm about his mother's waist.

"Start the car!" called out a man in a silk hat. "It's church-time now. Why can't people do this sort of thing before they start for church?" he grumbled.

It had gone far enough for Mr. Norris. "Young man," he said to the one who was now the center of all eyes, "you just take all the time you want to say good-bye to your mother. You don't know when you will say it to her for the last time. And if any of these people are so worried over their sins that they must hurry to church, why, they might get down on their knees right here and pray."—Cleveland Leader.

377. When Brothers Quarreled.

I knew of two brothers who had a quarrel. The mother could not reconcile them. She could not sleep. Her prayers went up night after night. One of the sons saw how she felt and was sorry for her, so he bought a costly gift and took it to her. "I don't want any gift," she said; "I want you to be reconciled to your brother." God doesn't want your gifts until you are reconciled.—H. J. Geyer.

378. Better Than Apparatus.

I know a minister who had to revise his sermon on the Monday, and was rather surprised when he found that having spoken on the Sabbath about the "Afflatus," the reporter had written—what, think you? "Apparatus"! But, brethren, the reporter was not the only man who has made that mistake. There are thousands in our churches who are substituting human apparatus for the afflatus of the Divine Spirit. Lord, help us never to confuse these two, but to look to Thee alone!—Rev. James Russell.

379. Blurring the Image.

I once saw, lying side by side in a great workshop, two heads made of metal. The one was perfect; all the features of a noble, manly face came out clear and distinct in their lines of strength and beauty; in the other, scarcely a single feature could be recognized; it was all marred and spoiled. "The metal had been let grow a little too cool, sir," said the man who was showing it to me. I could not help thinking how true that was of many a form more precious than metal. Many a young soul that might be stamped with the image and superscription of the King, while it is warm with the love and glow of early youth, is allowed to grow too cold, and the writing is blurred and the image is marred.—Canon Teignmouth Shore.

GRACE.

380. Plenteousness of Grace.

The philosophic Hammerton tells us the story of a woman who worked in a cotton factory in one of the great manufacturing towns in Lancashire, and who, on an excursion, went for the first time to the coast. When she caught the earliest glimpse of the Irish Sea, the expanse lying out before her eyes, looking like the limitlessness of the ocean in its rush and roll of billows, she exclaimed, as she drew one boundless breath of freshness and glory: "At last, here comes something there is enough of!"—Dr. C. Robinson.

381. More to Follow.

A benevolent person gave Mr. Rowland Hill a hundred pounds to dispense to a poor minister, and thinking it was too much to send him at once, Mr. Hill forwarded five pounds in a letter, with simply these words within the envelope: "More to follow." In a few days' time, the good man received another letter by the post—and letters by the post were rarities in those days; this second messenger contained another five pounds, with the same motto: "And more to follow." A day or two after came a third and a fourth, and still the same promise: "And more to follow." Till the whole sum had been received the astonished minister was made familiar with the cheering words: "And more to follow."

Every blessing that comes from God is sent with the self-same message: "And more to follow." "I forgive you your sins, but there's more to follow." "I justify you in the righteousness of Christ, but there's more to follow." "I adopt you into my family, but there's more to follow." "I educate you for Heaven, but there's more to follow." "I give you grace upon grace, but there's more to follow." "I have helped you even to old age, but there's still more to follow." "I will uphold you in the hour of death, and as you are passing into the world of spirits, my mercy shall still continue with you, and when you land in the world to come there shall still be 'More to follow.'"—C. H. Spurgeon.

382. Salvation All of Grace.

Mr. McClaren and Mr. Gustart were ministers of the Tolbooth Church, Edinburgh. When Mr. McClaren was dying, Mr. Gustart paid him a visit, and put the question to him: "What are you doing, brother?" His answer was: "Doing! I'll tell you what I am doing, brother. I am gathering together all my prayers, all my sermons, all my good deeds, all my evil deeds; and I am going to throw them all overboard, and swim to glory on the plank of free grace."—E. Foster.

383. Glorifying God's Grace.

Dr. Kane, finding a flower under the Humboldt glacier, was more affected by it because it grew beneath the lip and cold bosom of the ice than he would have been by the most gorgeous garden bloom. So the most single, struggling grace in the heart of one far removed from Divine influence may be dearer to God than a whole catalogue of virtues in the life of one more favoured of Heaven.—H. W. Beecher.

384. Attracted by Grace.

I noticed on one of our streets during the frost, when the pipes were all congealed and frozen and waterless, that the water authorities opened the main pipe early in the morning. The inhabitants got up that frosty morning, they turned the tap, but no water flowed. Then the neighbors began to tell one another that in a certain street the main pipe was flowing; and the bairns got their pitchers and buckets and flagons, and the women put their shawls over their heads in their hurry, and the domestics were sent out with the utensils from the kitchen. The cry had gone out that the water was flowing, and on that frosty morning they gathered around the main pipe. What brought them? Just the real flowing of real water. That was the reason of the crowd. If Christians were to experience freshly and literally and truly the grace of God, thousands would flock into every assembly in the city, and in the land, just drawn and won by the reality of the grace of Christ.—John Robertson.

385. Transfigured.

One of the most beautiful sights in the world is the Bay of Naples. No one who has ever seen it on a quiet summer evening, and watched it as the night gathered and through the darkness the flashes of fire from the summit of Vesuvius, like some torch of God, lighted it, can ever forget the scene. But scientific men tell us that that lovely Bay of Naples is the crater of a worn-out and flooded volcano. In the early morning of the world's history it was perhaps the greatest volcano on earth; it belched forth from its heart floods of seething lava. At last it sank down and down, its fiery heart was quelled, the lava ceased to flow, and in from the Mediterranean, perhaps first in some glorious day of storm, swept the white-caps of the sea and overflowed the crater and filled it full, and to-day the beautiful waters lie in peace and mirror back the shining heavens above. So many of our lives are like the crater. Passions have swept over us and left us worn out. But God's grace can fill our empty lives and make them sweet and beautiful and peaceful.—Sunday Circle.

386. "More to Follow."

Rowland Hill used to tell a good story of a rich man and a poor man in his congregation. The rich man desired to do an act of benevolence, and so he sent a sum of money to a friend to be given to this poor man as he thought best. The friend just sent him five pounds, and said in the note:

"This is thine. Use it wisely. There is more to follow."

After a while he sent another five pounds and said: "More to follow."

Again and again he sent the money to the poor man, always with the cheering words: "More to follow."

So it is with the wonderful grace

of God. There is always "More to follow."—D. L. Moody.

387. Drawing Daily.

A man can no more take in a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough to-day to last him for the next six months; or take sufficient air into his lungs at once to sustain life for a week to come. We must draw upon God's boundless stores of grace from day to day, as we need it.—Moody.

388. Imperceptible Operations of Grace.

The grandest operations both in nature and in grace are the most silent and imperceptible. The shallow brook babbles in its passage and is heard by every one, but the coming on of the seasons is silent and unseen. The storm rages and alarms, but its fury is soon exhausted and its effects are partial and soon remedied; but the dew, though gentle and unheard, is immense in quantity and the very life of large portions of the earth. And these are pictures of the operations of grace in the Church and in the soul.—R. Cecil.

389. Work of Grace.

A friend once showed an artist a costly handkerchief on which a blot of ink had been made. "Nothing can be done with it now, it is absolutely worthless." The artist made no reply, but carried it away with him. After a time he sent it back, to the great surprise of his friend, who could scarcely recognize it. In a most skillful and artistic way he had made a fine design in India ink, using the blot as a basis, making the handkerchief more valuable than ever. A blotted life is not necessarily a useless life. Jesus can make a life beautiful though it has been marred by sin. —Twentieth Century Pastor.

390. "My Grace Is Sufficient for Thee."

"When, sin-stricken, burdened, and weary,
From bondage I longed to be free,
There came to my heart the sweet message:
'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

"Though tempted and sadly discouraged,
My soul to this refuge will flee,
And rest in the blessed assurance:
'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

"My bark may be tossed by the tempest
That sweeps o'er the turbulent sea—
A rainbow illumines the darkness:
'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

"O Lord, I would press on with courage,
Though rugged the pathway may be,
Sustained and upheld by the promise:
'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

"Soon, soon will the warfare be over,
My Lord face to face I shall see,
And prove, as I dwell in His presence:
'His grace was sufficient for me.'"

GRATITUDE.

391. Deal Fairly With God.

The story of Captain Dreyfus is almost the saddest in history and is well known to us all.

The degradation of Dreyfus was attended by formalities humiliating to a proud man. The brilliant young officer was brought before the troops he had commanded, heralded as a traitor, stripped of his uniform, and openly reviled. He was treated as a wild beast while caged on Devil's Island, and was allowed almost no communication with the outside world. There were brave men who believed in Dreyfus, and who, on his behalf, dared to raise the voice of protest, when to do that was to invite calumny and even physical injury. It was Zola, the novelist, who led in this crusade in favour of his friend, and on the very spot where he was degraded Dreyfus was pronounced innocent. What if the soldier had turned against Zola, his friend? We would have counted him heartless. This is a poor illustration of what Jesus Christ has done for us, but because it does in part tell the story of his work in our behalf, we ought to deal fairly with Him.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

392. Gratitude for Redemption.

A few months before the death of Robert Louis Stevenson, certain Samoan chiefs whom he had befriended while they were under imprisonment for political causes, and whose release he had been instrumental in effecting, testified their gratitude by building an important piece of road leading to Mr. Stevenson's Samoan country house, Vailima. At a corner of the road there was erected a notice, prepared by the chiefs and bearing their names, which reads:

"The Road of the Loving Heart. Remembering the great love of his highness, Tusitala, and his loving care when we were in prison and sore distressed, we have prepared him an enduring present, this road which we have dug to last for ever."—J. A. Hammerton.

393. Deferred Payments.

Dr. Dwight of America tells how, when the country near Albany was newly settled, an Indian came to the inn at Lichfield, and asked for a night's shelter—at the same time confessing that from failure in hunting he had nothing to pay. The hostess drove him away with reproachful epithets, and as the Indian was retiring sorrowfully—there being no other inn for many a weary mile—a man who was sitting by directed the hostess to supply his wants and promised to pay her. As soon as his supper was ended, the Indian thanked his benefactor, and said he would some day repay him. Several years thereafter the settler was taken prisoner by a hostile tribe, and carried off to Canada. His life was spared, however, though he himself was detained in slavery. But one day an Indian came to him, and giving him a musket, bade the captive follow him. The Indian never told where they were going, or what was his object; but day after day the captive followed his mysterious guide, till one afternoon they came suddenly on a beautiful expanse of cultivated fields, with many houses rising amongst them. "Do you know that place?" asked the Indian. "Ah, yes—it is Lichfield"; and whilst the astonished exile had not recovered his surprise and amazement, the Indian exclaimed: "And I am the starving Indian on whom at this very place you took pity. And now that I have paid for my supper, I pray you go home."—James Hamilton.

HEART.

394. Need of a Pure Heart.

A lady who had lost a little daughter took a photograph and painted it with rare skill and laid it in a drawer, and was grieved to find that soon afterwards it was covered with ugly blotches. She painted it again and it was soon marred. There was something wrong with the paper, some chemical ingredients in undue proportions. No matter how beautiful the picture made on its surface, ever up out of the heart of the paper would come the ooze of decay. So with human life, the heart being wrong spoils all.—J. R. Miller.

395. Christ Dwelling in the Heart.

A widow woman lives by herself in a little cottage by the seashore. Of all whom she loved, only one survives—a lad at sea; all the rest have passed "from sunshine to the sunless land." She has not set her eyes on him for years. But her heart is full of him. She thinks of him by day, and dreams of him by night. His name is never left out from her prayers. The winds speak about him; the stars speak about him; the waves speak about him, both in storm and in calm. No one has difficulty in understanding how her boy dwells in her heart. Let that stand as a parable of what may be for every believer in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—J. Culross, D.D.

396. Heart Hunger.

Between the hours of ten and twelve, for many nights, a poor woman might have been seen making her way through the streets of London. A year had passed since her only daughter had left home, and entered service in the metropolis. There she became acquainted with gay companions, and she was now living a life of open sin. The mother learned that her daughter might be seen every night in a certain part of the town. After many nights of watching, she was about to despair, when she saw a figure closely resembling that of her daughter. She eagerly approached, and was about to stretch out her arms to embrace it, when the light of a lamp showed that it was not her child. In an agony of grief she exclaimed: "Ah! it is not she. I was looking for my daughter; but, no, you are not my child." The poor girl burst into tears, saying: "I have no mother—I wish I had; I wish some one would look for me. I wish some one would look for me." Alas! there are multitudes who in the bitterness of their souls cry out: "I wish some one would look for me!" Fatherless, motherless, homeless, they tread their darkened courses, and in the anguish of their stricken spirits cry out: "No man careth for my soul!" Thanks be to God, there is One who is higher than all, whose tender mercies fail not, and who looks with pitying eye on those upon whom others look with hate and scorn. And let us follow the example of Him whose mission here was to seek the ruined, and to save those that are lost.—Christian Herald.

397. Heart-Hunger.

I really enjoy visiting (as chaplain) the boys of the reformatory school. Some of them seem very lonely. I found one down in the old engine-house fast asleep, and cuddled in his arms lay our little kitten which was lost weeks ago. The day before he said to our little Johnny: "Johnny, did you ever have a very pretty, plump little kitten, with shiny black and white fur?" "Yes, where is it?" asked Johnny. "Oh, I was going by your house and just took it up in my arms and brought it home with me, and I thought I would keep it a day or two, for it felt so nice and warm; and do you know I keep it here in this old boiler-house with me, and I give it part of my breakfast and dinner. It sleeps in my arms and it is the only thing on earth that I love, or that loves me. Now, Johnny, do you want your kitten back again?" Of course Johnny could not take the little fellow's only treasure from him.—"Life of Dr. James Phillips."

398. Hardening the Heart.

On a winter evening, when the frost is setting in with growing intensity, and when the sun is now far past the meridian, and gradually sinking in the western sky, there is a double reason why the ground grows every moment harder and more impenetrable to the plow. On the one hand, the frost of evening, with ever-increasing intensity, is indurating the stiffening clods. On the other hand, the genial rays, which alone can soften them, are every moment withdrawing and losing their enlivening power. Take heed that it be not so with you! As long as you are unconverted, you are under a double process of hardening. The frosts of an eternal night are settling down upon your souls; and the Sun of Righteousness with westering wheel, is hastening to set upon you for evermore. If, then, the plow of grace can not force its way into your ice-bound heart to-day, what likelihood is there that it will enter to-morrow?—R. McCheyne.

399. Afraid of Being Convinced.

At Cairo, Gobat entertained high hopes of the conversion of a learned Mohammedan teacher, Sheik Ahmed, which were doomed to disappointment. After many interviews, in which he appeared deeply impressed and ready to receive Christ as his Saviour and God, Gobat lost sight of him. Three months later he says: "I met him one day in the street. I asked him why he had not called for so long a time, to which he naïvely replied: "The last time I was with you I felt that if I went to you again I should be convinced of the truths of Christianity, and be consequently obliged to avow myself a Christian, for which I should have been killed. I therefore resolved to see you no more until my heart should be hardened against your arguments." —"Memoirs of Bishop Gobat."

400. Depravity of the Heart.

Lord, when we seek the human heart,
We find a fallen world within;
There is no health in any part,
Sin reigns throughout, and death by sin.

Large provinces are pagan still,
Where other lords dominion share;
Idols of mind, affection, will,
The power of darkness triumphs there.

Here, the false prophet's wild domains,
Where lust, and cruelty, and hate,
With baleful passions, fire the veins,
And seal the conscience up in fate.

'Midst all the stubborn, stiff-necked Jew,
Blind, like his kindred prone to roam,
Denies the Saviour whom he slew,
Mammon his God, and earth his home.

I know a bosom, which within
Contains the world's sad counterpart;
'Tis here,—the reign of death and sin;
Oh God! evangelize my heart!
—James Montgomery.

HELL.

401. Retribution of Sin Mercifully Revealed.

I do not accept the doctrine of eternal punishment because I delight in it. I would cast in doubts, if I could, till I had filled hell up to the brim. I would destroy all faith in it, but that would do me no good; I could not destroy the thing. I can not alter the stern fact. The exposition of future punishment in God's Word is not to be regarded as a threat, but as a merciful declaration. If, in the ocean of life, over which we are bound to eternity, there are these rocks and shoals, it is no cruelty to chart them down; it is an eminent and prominent mercy.—H. W. Beecher.

402. Too Respectable for Hell.

A wealthy merchant of Philadelphia, who would not listen to the gospel message in health, sent for me at his death-bed. I told him: "I have nothing now to tell you. You are a sinner, and here is a Saviour. Do you feel your guilt, and will you take a Saviour?" "No. There must be some better place than hell for a man of my respectability."—S. H. Thyng, D.D.

403. Love of Darkness.

When the Bastille was about to be destroyed a prisoner was brought out, who had long been lying in one of its gloomy cells. Instead of joyfully welcoming his liberty, he entreated that he might be taken back to his dungeon. It was so long since he had seen the light that his eye could not endure the light of the sun. Besides this, his friends were all dead, he had no home, and his limbs refused to move. His chief desire now was that he might die in the dark prison where so long he had been a captive.—W. Denton.

404. Lost Thoughts.

At death a man sees all those thoughts which were not spent upon God to be fruitless. A Scythian captain having, for a draught of water, yielded up a city, cried out: "What have I lost? What have I betrayed?" So will it be with that man when he comes to die who hath spent all his meditations upon the world; he will say: "What have I lost? What have I betrayed? I have lost Heaven, I have betrayed my soul." Should not the consideration of this fix our minds upon the thoughts of God and glory? All other meditations are fruitless; like a piece of ground which hath much cost laid out upon it, but it yields no crop.—I. Watson.

405. Fear of Hell.

It is said that the son of that profligate French prince Louis who is branded with the name of the "godless Regent" was, in his boyhood, deeply impressed by what his tutor told him about the punishments reserved for obstinate sinners. He grew up into manhood, serious, conscientious, pure in life, devout towards God, compassionate towards men. The fear of hell, as such, had done its work at the right time; it fairly burned out the germs of sinful passion; it prepared him, we cannot doubt, for a better spiritual condition at last attained. It may be so with many a youth who is not yet accessible to higher motives, but who believes that wicked ways lead to hell, and who therefore, in his own phrase, "keeps himself straight." Is not this "fear" worth something? Bishop Andrewes, alluding to it, observes that it is "as the base-court to the temple"; and adds that a man must do his duty "for fear of punishment, if he cannot get himself to do it for love of righteousness."—William Bright.

406. Beautiful Hell.

One memorable night, a young lad and an old Scotchman being in Paris together, found themselves in front of one of the dens of infamy; the fragrance of the spices of Araby seemed to float in the air, and the sounds of music and dancing broke upon the ear. The glitter and dazzle of fairyland was at the door; and the Scotch boy said: "What is that?" The body of the friend to whom he spoke now moulders in the dust; the voice that answered is now singing praises to God on high; but the hand of that Scotchman came like a vise to the wrist of the lad who was with him, and the voice hardened to a tone that he never forgot, as he said: "Man, that is hell!" "What!" It was a new idea to the country lad. Hell with an entrance like that!—with all the colours of the rainbow; with all the flowers and beauty, and the witching scenery and attractions! I thought hell was ugly; I thought I would get the belch of sulphur at the pit's mouth; I thought harpies on infernal wing would be hovering over the pit: but here like this? Yes, I saw above the gate—and I knew French enough to know what it meant—"Nothing to Pay." That was on the gate; but, though there be nothing to pay to get in, what have you to pay to get out? That is the question. Character blasted! soul lost! Mind that. Just examine your ways. Do not be taken in by the flowers and music, and the beautiful path that is at your feet this afternoon.

—John Robertson.

407. The Betrayer Denied.

I went to West Point not long ago, and we had an evening meeting in the old chapel. As we passed under the rear gallery to go out, one of the students stopped and said: "I wish you would look at that shield on the wall there; that is the most striking thing at the academy to me." I looked at the wall; all around there were marble shields set in the wall, and on each shield was the name of one of our Revolutionary generals. Then I looked up at the particular shield to which attention had been called, and that shield was blank. It was there in form just as the others, but with no name on it; simply the words Major General, and the date of the unnamed general's birth. "What does it mean?" I asked. "Well," said the cadet, "that is the shield for Benedict Arnold. There is a shield for every Revolutionary general, and one for him too, but the nation would not cut his name on it nor the date of his death. He denied his country; his country has denied him."—Robert E. Speer.

408. Profit and Loss.

At Aix-la-Chapelle is the tomb of the great Emperor Charlemagne. He was buried in the central space beneath the dome; but the manner of his burial is one of the most impressive sermons ever preached. In the death-chamber beneath the floor he sat on a marble chair—the chair in which kings had been crowned—wrapped in his Imperial robes. A book of the Gospel lay open in his lap; and as he sat there, silent, cold, motionless, the finger of the dead man's hand pointed to the words of Jesus: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

—H. H. Griffiths.

409. No Escape.

There is an old tale in our Scottish history, that a bridegroom was murdered by a friend on the festal day. The cup that his friend presented to him was mingled with poison; and when death was in the castle, the culprit took the fleetest horse from the stable and plunged into the forest. All night long the hoofs of that horse struck fire as he went at galloping speed through the forest. The man wanted to get away from the scene of his crime, and would not let the fleet animal rest, but plunged the spurs deep into the horse's flanks. All night on and on, and as the dawn was breaking he emerged, horse bespattered with foam, breathless from the forest—right before the castle. He had ridden hard, but he had ridden round: he thought he was going away from his crime, and in the morning he came to it.

Ah, you cannot get away from your sin unless God takes you away. You cannot by speed of foot get away from your sin, your sin will go to the grave with you, your sin will go to the great white throne with you. You cannot race your sin, you had better give it up, and see whether God in His mercy hath not some plan of redemption from sin.—John Robertson.

410. Torment.

"Forever round the mercy-seat,
The guiding lights of love shall burn;
But what if, habit-bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn?
What if thine eye refuse to see,
Thine ear of heaven's free welcome fail,
And thou a willing captive be,
Thyself thine own dark jail?
O doom beyond the saddest guess,
As the long years of God unroll,
To make thy dreary selfishness
The prison of a soul."

—J. G. Whittier.

HOLY SPIRIT.

411. While Gathering Pearls.

The pearl-diver lives at the bottom of the ocean by means of the pure air conveyed to him from above. His life is entirely dependent on the life-giving Spirit. We are down here, like the diver, to gather pearls for our Master's crown. The source of our life comes from above.—Henry Drummond.

412. Grieving the Spirit.

Once a man who owned a beautiful house invited one of his friends to come and live with him. He provided for his guest a room, a bed to sleep in, and a place at his table. By and by, though, he met another man, who charmed him, so he invited this one also to come and stay with him. He went to the one that he had invited first and asked that he share his room with the stranger; a little while afterward he was asked to give up his bed for the same purpose; then to surrender his place at the table. We are not surprised to know that, deeply grieved, he left the house altogether.

Thus has many a man crowded the blessed Guest from his heart. When the world begins to war with the Spirit for the possession of your heart, beware lest the Holy One be grieved and take His departure.—Mattie M. Boteler.

413. Holy Spirit the Illuminator.

I remember to have heard from one who was a spectator at the time, of his having once seen a little child playing upon a headland over the sea, who took a telescope from the hand of one near him, and handed it to a blind old sailor who was sitting on the cliff, and the child asked the blind man to sweep the far horizon and tell him with the glass what ships were there. The old man, however, could only turn bitterly towards the child with those sightless eyes of his; and, it seems to me, that you might as well give a telescope to a sightless man as to give the Bible to a man whom you do not suppose to possess the guidance of the Spirit.—Bishop W. Alexander.

414. Quench Not the Spirit.

A man has lost his way in a dark and dreary mine. By the light of one candle, which he carries in his hand, he is groping for the road to sunshine and to home. That light is essential to his safety. The mine has many winding passages in which he may be hopelessly bewildered. Here and there marks have been made on the rocks to point out the true path, but he cannot see them without that light. There are many deep pits into which, if unwary, he may suddenly fall, but he cannot avoid the danger without that. Should it go out he must soon stumble, fall, perish. Should it go out that mine will be his tomb. How carefully he carries it! How anxiously he shields it from sudden gusts of air, from water dropping on it, from everything that might quench it! The case described is our own. We are like that lonely wanderer in the mine. Does he diligently keep alight the candle on which his life depends? Much more earnestly should we give heed to the warning: "Quench not the Spirit." Sin makes our road both dark and dangerous. If God gave us no light, we should never find the way to the soul's sunny home of holiness and heaven. We must despair of ever reaching our Father's house. We must perish in the darkness into which we have wandered. But He gives us His Spirit to enlighten, guide, and cheer us.—Newman Hall, LL.B.

415. Need of the Holy Spirit.

I have seen a captive eagle, caged far from its distant home, as he sat mournful-like on his perch, turn his eye sometimes heavenwards; there he would sit in silence, like one wrapt in thought, gazing through the bars of his cage up into the blue sky; and after a while, as if noble but sleeping instincts had suddenly awoke, he would start and spread out his broad sails, and leap upward, revealing an iron chain that, usually covered by his plumage, drew him back again to his place. But though this bird of heaven knew the way to soar aloft, and sometimes, under the influence of old instincts, decayed, but not altogether dead, felt the thirst of freedom, freedom was not for him, till a power greater than his own proclaimed liberty to the captive, and shattered the shackles that bound him to his perch. Nor is there freedom for us till the

Holy Spirit sets us free, and by the lightning force of truth, breaks the chains that bind us to sin.—T. Guthrie, D.D.

416. Fire Purifies.

I remember, some years ago, when I was at Shields, I went into a glass house; and, standing very attentive, I saw several masses of burning glass of various forms. The workman took a piece of glass and put it into one furnace, then he put it into a second, and then into a third. I said to him: "Why do you put it through so many fires?" He answered: "Oh, sir, the first was not hot enough, nor was the second; therefore we put it into a third, and that will make it transparent."—George Whitefield.

417. Coming of the Holy Spirit.

When Nansen started on his Arctic Expedition he took with him a carrier pigeon, strong and fleet of wing; and after two years—two years in the desolation of the Arctic regions—he one day wrote a tiny little message and tied it under the pigeon's wing, and let it loose to travel two thousand miles to Norway; and oh! what miles! what desolation! not a living creature! ice, ice, ice, snow, and death. But he took the trembling little bird and flung her up from the ship, up into the icy cold. Three circles she made, and then, straight as an arrow she shot south; one thousand miles over ice, one thousand miles over the frozen wastes of ocean, and at last dropped into the lap of the explorer's wife. She knew, by the arrival of the bird, that it was all right in the dark night of the North. So with the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Heavenly Dove, the disciples knew that Christ was alive, for his coming and his manifest working were proofs of it.—Joyful News Magazine.

418. Invisible Attraction.

A little boy was flying a kite, which had soared so high as to be almost out of sight. Seeing him looking so intensely upward, a gentleman asked him what he had there. "A kite, sir," was the boy's reply. "A kite!" said the gentleman. "How can that be, I don't see it." "Ah! I feel it pulling, sir," was the boy's unanswerable reply. This should be our evidence that our Saviour is above—we should feel Him pulling.—T. De Witt Talmage.

419. Quenching the Spirit.

Several years ago I was called to visit a young man who was said to be sick, and wished to see me. Approaching him as he was lying upon his bed, I remarked that he certainly did not look as though he were ill. He replied: "I am not sick in my body, but in my soul. I am in deep distress." Asking him the cause of his distress, he said: "During the revival in our church, I have not only resisted its influence, but I have made sport of the young converts. I have ridiculed those who were seeking the salvation of their souls, and I feel that I have committed an unpardonable sin, and there is no hope for me." I said to him: "Your sins are indeed fearfully great; but if you sincerely repent, and will now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, He will pardon you." I referred to the Saviour's compassion for the thief on the cross, and to other cases that might awaken some hope in his mind. But everything that was said failed to reach his case. His reply to every argument, or appeal, or passage of Scripture that was quoted was the same: "There is no hope for me." After an earnest prayer for his salvation, and commending him to the mercy of God, I left him. Calling the next day, I found he had passed a sleepless night, and the state of his mind was unchanged. Again, after my pointing him to the promises of the Scriptures, and praying with him, he expressed the same feeling of utter despair. Not a ray of light crossed the dark cloud that hung over his soul. The third day on entering his room I found him in a raging fever. His mental agony had taken effect upon his body. Without any indications at first of physical disease he was now lying in a most critical condition. I pointed him once more to the bleeding Saviour on the cross, and pled with him at the throne of grace. But with him the harvest was past, the summer of hope was ended. He had quenched the Spirit, not only by his personal resistance, but by hindering and laughing at others who were seeking to escape eternal death. The next day I found that his reason was dethroned. His fond mother was bathing his temples with ice-water. On my addressing him, he replied in an incoherent manner. He was beyond the reach of any Gospel tidings. That night his soul passed into eternity.—Rufus W. Clark, D.D.

420. High Tide of God's Mercy.

A Norwegian vessel had run on the rocks to the north of Stonehaven; and the sailors anxiously waited the incoming of the tide. It was their only hope. If the tide came in high enough to float their vessel, she would be all right yet, and there would be good news in yonder Norway port. Anxiously they listened to the lap of the incoming wave; anxiously those men wondered whether the tide had turned or not; whether the vessel that had been put into their care was to be left to go to pieces, or whether the foam on the surface of the ocean would be deep enough to float her.

They were all on board, and they felt the vessel shake herself as the waves came in. One man said: "I do not think it will be high enough"; another man said: "I do not think that the tide has begun to turn yet," and then she began to scrape somewhat in the wash of the sea on the rocks; but at last the inroll of the last wave from the rising tide set her afloat, and out she moved, safe. The tide did it. One moment more, and it would have been a shipwreck.

God help you, that is often the case in your life. There are shipwrecks by the ten thousand, in this Glasgow, that have missed the tide. The revival of '59 moved them, but they were not afloat, they were not converted; then when Messrs. Moody and Sankey came to this city about twenty years ago, and the roll of the tide was in our city again, they did heave a bit to the singing to these new hymns. It was a novelty, and things seemed to augur well for the conversion of these men; but there they are, stuck fast, and hell is the next thing. There are souls in this city, and there may be some here to-night, who will never be saved. The highest tide of God's mercy has come upon them, and they are yet unconverted, and there is no more to come to them. God sent the flood tide, and they held to the rocks, fastened themselves like limpets, and there they are, dead and damned, as though they were in hell to-night. Gone! No better sermons, no more fervent appeals.

no higher tide, no bigger revival! Gone!

Ah, there is a tide in the affairs of souls which taken at the flood leads on to salvation; omitted, all the voyage of their life is spent in shallows and in miseries; that is your religious life. The tide is gone. You should have been afloat by this time, but the wave has rolled back to the deep, and you are unconverted, unsaved, and there is nothing more. God has emptied His grace upon you, and you have defied it all, and you are on the rocks to-night.—John Robertson.

421. Heat Within.

On a winter's day I have noticed a row of cottages, with a deep load of snow on their several roofs; but as the day wore on, large fragments began to tumble from the eaves of this one and that other, till, by-and-by, there was a simultaneous avalanche, and the whole heap slid over in powdery ruin on the pavement, and before the sun went down you saw each roof as clear and dry as on a summer's eve. But here and there you would observe one with its snow-mantle unbroken, and a ruff of stiff icicles around it. What made the difference? The difference was to be found within. Some of these huts were empty, or the lonely inhabitant cowered over a scanty fire; whilst the peopled hearth and the high-blazing fagots of the rest created such an inward warmth that grim winter melted and relaxed his grip, and the loosened mass folded off and tumbled over on the trampled street. It is possible by some outward process to push the main volume of snow from the frosty roof, or chip off the icicles one by one. But they will form again, and it needs an inward heat to create a total thaw. And so, by sundry processes, you may clear off from a man's conduct the dead weight of conspicuous sins; but it needs a hidden heat, a vital warmth within, to produce such a separation between the soul and its besetting iniquities that the whole wintry incubus, the entire body of sin, will come spontaneously away. That vital warmth is the love of God abundantly spread abroad—the kindly glow which the Comforter diffuses in the soul which he makes his home. His genial inhabitation thaws that soul and its favorite sins asunder, and makes the indolence and self-indulgence and indevotion fall off from their old resting-place on that dissolving heart. The easiest form of self-mortification is a fervent spirit.—James Hamilton, D.D.

422. Holy Spirit Revealing the Things of Christ.

As the page may bear upon its surface writings traced in viewless ink, which are there, and yet are as if they were not, until the nearness of the fire shall call them out into a new distinctness, so may all truth be written on the mind of man, and yet be dead and meaningless, until called into power and being by the falling on it of these rays of the heavenly fire; and then every word of Scripture, every voice of God in His Church, every sacrament, comes forth into shape and completeness, as Christ is seen by the soul to be there.—Bishop S. Wilberforce.

423. Tongue of Fire.

Suppose we saw an army sitting down before a granite fort, and they told us that they intended to batter it down: we might ask them, "How?" They point to a cannonball. Well, but there is no power in that; it is heavy, but if all the men in the army hurled it against the fort they would make no impression. They say, "No; but look at the cannon." Well, there is no power in that. A child may ride upon it, a bird may perch in its mouth; it is a machine, and nothing more. "But look at the powder." Well, there is no power in that; a child may spill it, a sparrow may peck it. Yet this powerless powder and powerless ball are put into a powerless cannon; one spark of fire enters it—and then, in the twinkling of an eye that powder is a flash of lightning, and that ball a thunderbolt, which smites as if it had been sent from Heaven. So is it with our Church machinery at this day; we have all the instruments necessary for pulling down strongholds, and, oh for the baptism of fire!—William Arthur.

424. Cleanse by Fire.

In 1665 London was in the grip of that terrible Plague the horrors of which may still be felt through the pages of Defoe. The disease germs were hiding and breeding and multiplying everywhere. Every corner became a nest of contagion. Nothing could be found to displace it. In the following year the Great Fire broke out, and the plague-smitten city was possessed by the spirit of burning. London was literally baptized with fire, which sought out the most secret haunts of the contagion, and in the fiery baptism the evil genius of corruption gave place to the sweet and friendly genius of health. Fire accomplished quite easily what water would never have attained. And so in a comparison of fire and water as cleansing and redeeming agencies, common experience tells us that fire is the keener, the more searching, the more powerful, the more intense.—J. H. Jowett.

425. Flood Tide.

Some time ago I stood on the east coast of England and looked out over a stretch of oozy slime and ill-smelling mud. There were the barges high and dry, lying on their sides, in the mud. No good their heaving the anchor or hoisting the sail—all this availed them nothing. And as I looked out upon it I thought within myself—What is the remedy? Were it any use for the Corporation to pass a by-law that every citizen should bring pot, kettle, or pan filled with water, and pour it out upon the stretch of mud? But as I watched I saw the remedy—God turned the tide. In swept the waters of the sea and buried the mud, and then came the breath of sweetness and life. And it flowed in about the barges, and instantly all was activity. Then heave-ho with the anchor, then hoist the sails, then forth upon some errand of good. So is it that we stand looking out upon many a dreadful evil that fills us with dismay—drunkenness, gambling, impurity. Is there any remedy? And the churches, so very respectable, dreadfully respectable many of them—but alas! high and dry on the mud—for these, too, what is the remedy. We want the flood-tide—the gracious outpouring of the Spirit; then must come the roused and quickened churches. It is ours now if we will have it: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me."—M. G. Pearse.

HYPOCRISY.

426. Pretending.

Judge Rooney, of Chicago, fined a man $100 and costs and sentenced him to jail for ninety days for impersonating a doctor and practising medicine without a license. I wonder how many professing Christians, ministers, and laymen would be "hit" by a law fining those who pretended to be Christians and were not. Are we leading or misleading people by our pretensions? —The Expositor.

427. Hypocrites.

I can stand anything better than I can a hypocrite. The students at Princeton, I believe it was, played a joke on one of the professors. He was one of those old bugologists, and I reckon he had specimens of all the bugs in the world in his frames and boxes. The mischievous boys got the legs of one bug and the body of another and the head and wings of others, and put them together as if nature had so formed them, and then they laid it on the old professor's table and walked in, and asked him what kind of a bug that was; and he said: "Gentlemen, that is a humbug." When a fellow gets a little of everything in him and is made up of a hundred different sorts of things, then he is a first-class humbug in every sense of the word.—Sam Jones.

428. Counterfeits.

The traveller to Pompeii is shown in the temple of Isis the statue of the divinity through whose open lips the credulous worshipers of long ago fancied they obtained trustworthy answers to their petitions. But alongside the ruined shrine he also sees the secret staircase by which the fraudulent priest reached the back of the statue and the concealed pipe through which he murmured the responses of the oracle. Time will uncover every attempt to deceive the world with counterfeit revelations of the Divine Person. A day of reckoning will inevitably confront the false prophet.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

429. Confidence Betrayed.

A mother in Belgium saw a German approaching her home, so hid her children in the cellar, knowing what had happened to many other boys and girls. The German demanded supper, lodging and breakfast, which she provided. In the morning she was amazed when he paid her for the accommodation. Thinking here was at last one German soldier who had a tender heart, she told him of her fears and of how she hid her children.

"So?" replied the man. "I, too, have children. Let me see yours?"

Whereupon the fond mother called up the treasures of her heart from the cellar. When they appeared in the room, as deliberately as he would have killed a dog, the German shot them both dead at her feet. In her awful grief she told the story to a neighbor—but now she tells it through the bars of her window in an insane asylum.—The Spiker.

430. Once Denied, Thrice Denied.

Lie engenders lie. Once committed, the liar has to go on in his course of lying. It is the penalty of his transgression. To the habitual liar, bronzed and hardened in the custom, till the custom becomes second nature, the penalty may seem no terrible price to pay. To him, on the other hand, who, without deliberate intent, and against his innermost will, is overtaken with such a fault, the generative power of a first lie to beget others, the necessity of supporting the first by a second and a third, is a retribution to be felt keenly, while penitently owned to be most just. Dean Swift says: "He who tells a lie is not sensible how great a task he undertakes; for he must be forced to invent twenty more to support that one"; and F. W. Robertson: "One step necessitates many others. The soul gravitates downwards beneath its burden. It was profound knowledge which prophetically refused to limit Peter's sin to one." Mr. Froude shows us Queen Elizabeth stooping to "a deliberate lie." At times "she seemed to struggle with her ignominy, but it was only to flounder deeper into distraction and dishonour." Nobody ever did anything wrong without having to tell one or more falsehoods to begin with: the embryo murderer has to tell a lie about the pistol or dagger, the would-be suicide about the poison. "The ways down which the bad ship Wickedness slides to a shoreless ocean must be greased with lies."—F. Jacox, B.A.

431. Hypocrites.

Many people are offended with the profession of religion, because all are not religious who make a profession. A little consideration will correct this error. Does the sheep despise its fleece because the wolf has worn it? Who blames a crystal river because some melancholy men have drowned themselves in its streams? The best drugs have their adulterants. And will you refuse an opiate, because some have wantonly poisoned themselves with it? Though you have been cozened with false colours, yet you should not disesteem that which is dyed in grain. He is a bad economist who, having a spot in his garment, cuts off the cloth instead of rubbing off the dirt. God rejects all religion but His own.—T. Secker.

432. Inconsistent Profession.

The drollest illustration of Mr. Hill's, which has been communicated to me, was used by him when preaching about ten years ago in a village fifty or sixty miles distant from the metropolis. He had been pointing out the difference between the natural and renewed mind, as regards the observance of religious duties. The mere professor, he said, felt himself to be in an artificial and very uncomfortable state when engaged in the exercises of religion. The tendency of his mind was all the while towards the performance of actions that were sinful; and the moment he escaped from the restraints that circumstances imposed upon him, he would return to the world and his wicked courses. "The mere professor," added Mr. Hill, "reminds me of a sow that I saw two hours ago luxuriating in her stye when almost over head and heels in the mire. Now suppose any of you were to take the sow and wash her; and suppose, after having dressed her in a silk gown, and put a smart cap on her head, you were to take her into any of your parlours, and were to set her down to tea in company, she might look very demure for a time, and might not give even a single grunt; but you would observe that she occasionally gave a sly look towards the door, which showed that she felt herself in an uncomfortable position; and the moment that she perceived that the door was open, she would give you another proof of the fact, by running out of the room as fast as she could. Follow the sow, with her silk gown and her fancy cap, and in a few seconds you will find that she has returned to her stye and is again wallowing in the mire. Just so it is with the unrenewed man: sin is his element; and though he may be induced, from a variety of motives, to put on at times a show of religion, you will easily perceive that he feels himself to be under unpleasant restraints, and that he will return again to his sins whenever an opportunity of doing so, unknown to his acquaintances, presents itself to him.—Metropolitan Pulpit.

433. Double-Minded Men.

Of all the people to be pitied those who try to keep step with God on Sunday and flirt with the devil the remaining six days of the week come first. They remind me of an old apple-tree near my boyhood home, which stood at the fence line by the roadside. Its branches spread both into the field and out over the highway. There was always a contention as to whether the fruit of this tree belonged to the farmer or to the public. An unwritten law said it belonged to the one first to club it down. Every boy, big and little, watched to see when the apples were beginning to turn red and then the battle was on. I do not remember ever getting a ripe apple from that old tree and I was careful to see that everybody else was treated likewise. I never passed but what I saw lodged in its branches a lot of broom handles, gambrel sticks, and old wagon spokes. That tree got more clubbing than a whole orchard. There are many professing Christians who hang out on both sides of the fence, and they receive clubs from every direction. The world doesn't believe in their religion and the Gospel is a goad to the conscience every time they hear a sermon.—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

434. Mask Torn Off.

They have expert officials in France; their criminal system is the finest in the world. The artistic inventive faculties of the French nation are very many and very expert; and the criminal experts guide the world in that department. Just the other day there was a telegram received in Orleans, saying that a woman by the name of "Rosine" was wanted for theft, for robbery. The telegram came from Tours, and the gendarme who received the message kept his eyes open. When the train came puffing up to the platform at Orleans, he noticed a lady, who did not look the least like a thief, descend from it.

So he approached her and said: "Madam, pardon me, but in the name of the French government, I want to know who you are, and from where you have come."

"Oh, from Blois."

"And your name?"

"Marie Fachoux," she said, in her French pertness and quickness.

She turned her back, and was walking away, when he said in a low tone, "Rosine!" She turned. Caught. It was clever. Now what is your name? Church-member, giver to the sustentation fund, true-blue Auld Kirk, seceder to the backbone, listen! "Sinner!" Be honest: turn around. It is you that I want to arrest in the name of God.

Though your initials be scraped on the communion rolls of ten thousand churches, if you be not converted nor regenerated by the Spirit of God, you are on your way to the pit.

—John Robertson.

435. Evil Under the Guise of Good.

Sir Charles Follett, the chief of H. M. Customs, speaking on the clever tricks of smugglers, says: "We have had many extraordinary dodges come under our notice. For instance, innocent-looking loaves of bread, when accidentally examined, were discovered to have every particle of crumb removed from them, and the inside crammed with compressed tobacco. This is only one example of manifold specimens of cunning to bring in prohibited goods." How cunning is our great enemy to bring into our souls his contraband! Evil thoughts, desires, and deeds, covered with the most innocent and harmless-looking excuses; so that we need the wisdom from above if we are not to be unmindful of his devices.—H. O. Mackey.

436. Double-Tongued.

During the Civil War in America three Northern officers were appointed on a commission with three Southern officers, after the battle of Prairie Grove, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. While the commission was sitting, an aged farmer strayed into the room, thinking it was the provost's office. His eyes were dim, but he quickly noticed the uniforms, and supposing himself in the presence of the Northern staff, began protesting his loyalty to the Union. One of the officers facetiously advised him to be cautious, and, pointing to the Southern officers, told him to look at them. The old man put on his spectacles, and, recognizing the uniforms, explained that his heart was with the South in the great struggle, and that his only son was a soldier in the Southern army. Gazing around the room, he recognized the Northern uniforms also, and was bewildered. At last he leaned both hands on the table, and, surveying the entire party, he said: "Well, gentleman, this is a little mixed; but you just go on and fight it out among yourselves. I can live under any government."—Christian Herald.

437. Two Natures.

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote that famous book "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde" and yet Stevenson and all the others who had been writing about that subject only borrowed it from the Old Testament and the seventh chapter of Romans and the Apostle Paul. It was the problem of two factors in human life, the evil and the good, one fighting the other. The Apostle Paul reached it when he said, "When I would do good evil is present with me. Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Stevenson's man found a trick by which he could change himself into the person of another man, make an actual transformation of himself. He could change not only his internal thoughts and feelings but also his external looks and actions. Whenever he wanted to turn himself into Mr. Hyde he took a drug and the miracle was on. He changed his handwriting, he had a separate bank account for Mr. Hyde, everything in life was separate. And when Mr. Hyde, who went down into sin and constantly wallowed in those depths of iniquity, whenever he wanted to get away from it he took the drug and went back to Dr. Jekyl. When the officers were after him he had simply to go into the laboratory and swallow a pill and when they arrived the man they were looking for was not there.

That process went on through the years, but this was the peculiar fact about it: Not only by his will could he change himself into another man and so on back and forth, but he discovered at last when it was too late that every time he transformed himself from Dr. Jekyl, who was always so gentlemanly, kind, loving and truthful, into Mr. Hyde, who was so false and untruthful that every time he transformed himself into Mr. Hyde that Mr. Hyde became the stronger until at last the climax was reached. It became harder and harder to make the transfer and then it could not be made at all. Dr. Jekyl was dead and Mr. Hyde still lived, but he was damned to eternal darkness and death, helpless and hopeless. Here is the man who finished the sentence that Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde never finished, that Robert Louis Stevenson and no other author never finished. Here is the man who had the inspiration Divine. He said, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ, my Lord."—Cortland Myers, D.D.

438. Double Standard.

"There was a man, it was said one time,
Who went astray in his youthful prime.
Can the brain keep cool, and the heart keep quiet,
When the blood like a river is running riot?
And boys will be boys, the old folks say,
And the man is the better who has had his day.

"The man reformed, and the preacher told
Of a prodigal son who came back to the fold;
And the Christian people threw open their door
With a warmer welcome than ever before.
Wealth and honor were his to command,
And a spotless woman gave him her hand;
The world strewed their pathway with flowers abloom,
Crying, 'God bless lady, and God bless groom.'

"There was a maiden who went astray
In the early dawn of her youthful day.
She had more passion and heart than head,
And followed blindly where blind love led;
And love is ever a dangerous guide
To wander unchecked at a fair girl's side.

"The woman repented and turned from sin,
But no doors opened to let her in.
The preacher prayed that she might be forgiven,
But told her to look for mercy—in heaven.
For this is the way of the world, we know,
The woman is stoned, while the man may go.

"A brave man wedded her after all,
But the world said frowningly, 'We shall not call.'"
—Arthur T. Abernethy.

INGRATITUDE.

439. Human Ingratitude.

A pious clergyman, for more than twenty years, kept an account of the sick persons he visited during that period. The parish was thickly peopled, and, of course, many of his parishioners, during his residence, were carried to their graves.

A considerable number, however, recovered; and, amongst these, two thousand, who, in immediate prospect of death, gave those evidences of a change of heart which, in the judgment of charity, were connected with everlasting salvation supposing them to have died under the circumstances referred to. As, however, the tree is best known by its fruits, the sincerity of the professed repentance was yet to be tried, and all the promises and vows thus made, to be fulfilled. Out of these two thousand persons (who were evidently at the point of death, and had professed true repentance)—out of these two thousand persons who recovered, two, only two; allow me to repeat it—two, only two—by their future lives, proved that their repentance was sincere, and their conversion genuine. One thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight returned to their former carelessness, indifference, and sinfulness; and thus showed how little that repentance is to be depended upon, which is merely extorted by the rack of conscience and the fear of death. "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"—Selected.

440. World's Ingratitude.

Socrates, one of the wisest and noblest men of his time, after a long career of service in denouncing the wrongs of his age, and trying to improve the morals of the people, was condemned to death and obliged to drink poison. Dante, when Italy was torn by political factions, each ambitious of power, and all entirely unscrupulous as to the means employed to attain it, laboured with untiring zeal to bring about Italian unity, and yet his patriotism met no other reward than exile. "Florence for Italy, and Italy for the world," were his words when he heard his sentence of banishment. Columbus was sent home in irons from the country he had discovered. The last two years of his life present a picture of black ingratitude on the part of the Crown to this distinguished benefactor of the kingdom, which it is truly painful to contemplate. He died, perhaps, the poorest man in the whole kingdom he had spent his lifetime to enrich. Bruno, of Nola, for his advocacy of the Copernican system, was seized by the Inquisition and burned alive in Rome in 1600, in the presence of an immense concourse. Scioppus, the Latinist, who was present at the execution, with a sarcastic allusion to one of Bruno's heresies, the infinity of worlds, wrote: "The flames carried him to those worlds." —W. Denton.

441. Greatest Ingratitude.

It is a sin to close the heart against God. Suppose there is a man in this city who is good to everybody, with one exception. He is generous and will help anybody in trouble except his own mother, whom he treats with contempt. His mother is one of the best of women, but he drives her from his door and lets the neighbors furnish her food and clothing. Does the fact that he is good to his wife and children and gives his money generously, atone for treating his old mother like a brute. You call no man a good man who turns down his mother. Who would turn a mother from his door? But a greater than mother has been knocking at your heart's door and you keep Him without. Don't talk to me about being a good man when you with contempt turn Jesus away, treating him worse than you would a tramp.

—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

INVITATION.

442. At the Door.

In Holman Hunt's great picture called "The Light of the World," we see One with gentle, patient face, standing at a door, which is ivy-covered, as if long closed. He is girt with priestly breastplate. He bears in His hand the lamp of truth. He stands and knocks. There is no answer, and He still stands and knocks. His eye tells of love; His face beams with yearning. You look closely and you perceive that there is no knob or latch on the outside of the door. It can be opened only from within. Do you not see the meaning?—J. R. Miller.

443. Christ at the Door.

There is a familiar picture by Holman Hunt. There is shown a cottage neglected, falling into ruin. In front of the window tall thistles spring up, and long grass waves on the pathway, leading to the door overgrown with moss and rank poisonous weeds. In front of the fast-closed door with rusted hinges a tall and stately figure stands amid the night dews and the darkness with a face that tells of toil and long, weary waiting, and one hand uplifted to knock and another bearing a light that may perhaps flash through some of the chinks of the door. It is Christ, the Son of God, seeking to get into our sinful hearts.—W. G. Elmslie.

444. Come Just as You Are.

An artist wanted a man for a model who would represent the prodigal. One day he met a wretched beggar, and he thought: "That man would represent the prodigal." He found the beggar ready to sit for his painting if he would pay him. The man appeared on the day appointed, but the artist did not recognize him.

He said: "You made an appointment with me."

"No," responded the artist, "I never saw you before."

"You are mistaken; you did see me, and made an appointment with me."

"No; it must have been some other artist. I have an appointment to meet a beggar here at this hour."

"Well," said the beggar, "I am the man."

"You the man?"

"Yes."

"What have you been doing?"

"Well, I thought I would get a new suit of clothes before I got painted."

"Oh," replied the artist; "I don't want you."

And so if you are coming to God, come just as you are. Do not go and put on some garments of your own. Do not try to make yourself more acceptable to God. All your "put on" righteousness will not avail. Come just as you are. Come with all your crimes. Come with your broken vows. Come with your lost opportunities. Come with your hardened heart. Come with your crushing burden. Come, come just as you are.—Selected.

445. Earnest Seeking.

A man has lost a title-deed, or some paper that would decide a suit in his favour rather than against him. And with what alacrity does he search for it? How does he go through the house in quest of it? "My dear, have you seen that roll of paper with a great red seal on it?" "What was it? A newspaper?" "No, No! Not a newspaper. I shall lose a suit if I cannot find it." And his wife searched in every drawer and every trunk, and every closet, and even under the carpets. Both of them search night and day, going over the same place twenty times, saying: "Maybe I did not look thoroughly." And they cannot give it up. The man almost cries, he wants it so much. He will have it, so much depends upon it. And at last he finds it, and he says: "I would rather have had my house burned than not to have found this paper." Now, when men search for victorious virtues in their souls as they would search for an important legal document, do you suppose they will be saying, "Perhaps others may be able to live good Christian lives, but I cannot?" You can. And when you want true religion, when your soul hungers for it, you will find it.—H. W. Beecher.

446. Refusals.

A famous scientist tells how that, in the course of his experiments in the mountains, he used to be lowered over a precipice. He would step into the basket, and the men would lower him for his work; but whenever they lowered him, they would always test his weight to see if they could lift him again. One day they let him down farther and farther than ever before, until all the rope at their command was exhausted. When his day's work was done, he would give the signal, and they would draw him up. But on this night, when they took hold of the rope to lift him, they could not do so. They tugged and pulled and strained, but they could not manage it, and he had to wait until they got additional men to pull him up, and the scientist says that the reason they could not lift him was because they failed to take into consideration the length and weight of the rope. I know why a man of fifty years of age has a hard time to surrender. It is because he must always lift against his past refusals. You say, "No," and your heart is hardened; you say, "No," and your will becomes stubborn, and if you are finally lost, the responsibility is not with God.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

447. Mirage in the Desert.

Napoleon came with his soldiers to cross the desert on one of his long marches, and in that early morning when they started across the desert, the historian tells us that the hot sun came down on the white sands, and the light and heat reflected made the men pant for water, as they marched across that terrible desert. In their fierce thirst they looked everywhere for water, but the wells were dry, and no water could be found. Then they looked out there a little distance ahead and saw a beautiful lake of water, right out in the desert before them, and they lifted up a shout of joy, and started on a run toward the water, but as they ran toward that lake, the lake ran. As they got nearer, the lake receded and got farther away. It was not a lake of water at all. It was a mirage of the desert, such as you and I have seen many a time in this great West. It was a cheat. It was a delusion. It was a snare. Oh, my fellow-man, traveling with me to an eternity endless, that picture of the mirage in the desert is the picture of human life at its best, without God. Without God, life is defeated, and its true aim vitiated and missed and lost—without God. Awful expression is that in the Bible: "Having no hope, and without God in the world."—George W. Truett, D.D.

448. Another Chance.

There is a story told of General Havelock, the father of Sir Henry

Havelock-Allan, that when he was serving in India there was on one occasion need for some military expedition which would be attended with great danger and difficulty, but which would bring distinction to the officer who could lead it successfully. It properly fell to General Havelock; but there was an officer of lower rank who had made some grave mistake or failed in some previous expedition of which he had had charge, and on whose reputation a shadow was resting in consequence. Havelock gave way to the younger officer. He offered him a rare opportunity, which he was not slow to embrace.—H. Bonner.

449. Christ the Way Through.

A distinguished artist lately, speaking to some students on artistic composition, declared it to be a wrong thing pictorially to have a picture of woodland or forest without showing a path leading out of it. When the true artist paints a landscape he invariably gives some suggestion of a path which can carry the eye out of the picture. Otherwise the tangle of trees and undergrowth would suffocate us, or the wide, trackless spaces dismay us. So God ever provides a Way of escape for His children.—Sunday At Home.

450. Working at the Keyhole.

A blessed work of grace had been going on in various parts of Scotland. Many had accepted God's "great salvation" and rejoiced in their newly-found Saviour. Among these was a Mr. Murray, an office-bearer in one of the churches and for fifty years a professor of religion, without, however, the "one thing needful." One day as Mr. Murray was reading a Gospel paper he came across the following statement: "The Gospel brings us not a work to do, but a word to believe about a work done." "I see it all," said he to his wife. "I have been working away at the keyhole, and the door has been open all the time. My fifty years' profession goes for nothing, and I get salvation through simply accepting Christ."—"Love Wins."

451. Calling Repeatedly.

A touching story comes to us from Minnesota. A farmer, living on the edge of one of the many lakes of that state, started to cross it in a small sailboat one evening. The wind changed, and a gust overturned the boat when he was in the middle of the lake. The surface of the water was covered with masses of floating ice.

The farmer was a good swimmer, and struck out boldly toward that part of the shore where he thought his house stood; but he grew confused in the darkness. He gave up at last, and was sinking in the freezing water, when he heard a sound. It was the voice of his little girl, calling him, "Father! Father!"

He listened. The sound of her voice would tell him which way home lay. It put fresh life into him. He thought: "If she would only call once more. But she will be frightened at the dark and cold. She will go in and shut the door." But just then came the cry, loud and clear: "Father!"

"I turned," said the man afterward, in telling the story, "and struck out in the opposite direction. I had been going away from home. I fought my way; the ice broke before me. I reached the shore and home at last. But if my dear little girl had not persisted in calling me, though hearing no reply, I should have died there under the ice."

The story of many a man's life is like that of this voyage, and there is always one Voice calling to him, which, if he will hear and heed, will bring him home.—Young Lutheran.

452. Flood-Tide.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

Planting must be done in seedtime. Tending the field must be done in growing time. Harvesting must be done when the crop is ripe. We must make hay while the sun shines. We must grind our grist while the water is flowing by the mill. We must teach the child while he is the child. We must show love while the loved ones are still with us. We must prepare for the future while it is still to-day.—H. C. Trumbull.

453. An Effectual Cry.

I heard of two millers who used to keep the old mill going day and night, and at midnight one miller would go down the stream, pull his boat up two or three yards above the dam, and the other miller would come along the other way. One night the miller was going down as usual, and he fell asleep, and when he awoke, it was the water over the dam that woke him. He knew that if he went over he would be dashed to pieces on the rocks below. He seized his oars and tried to pull back, but he found that it was too late. But he got hold of a little twig between the rocks. It began to give way; and if that twig had come away he would have been swept over the dam and lost; but there was just enough strength in the root to hold him; and so he sat there in the boat and held on, and he cried, "Help! Help! Help!" and he kept crying, until at last the cry of distress was heard by the brother miller, and he found out the situation, and he got a rope and threw it, and the man let go of the twig and laid hold of the rope, and they pulled him out of the jaws of death. He saved his life because it was an honest cry for help. And there is not a man or a woman in this house to-night but that shall be eternally saved if he or she will send the cry up to heaven, "Lord, help me; Lord, remember me. Lord, save me, or I perish." "It shall come to pass that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Put the promise to the test.—John MacNeil.

454. Disregarding God.

I know a mother who has an idiot child. For it she gave up all society, almost everything, and devoted her whole life to it. "And now," said she, "for fourteen years I have tended it, and loved it, and it does not even know me. Oh, it is breaking my heart!" Oh, how the Lord might say this of hundreds here! Jesus comes here, and goes from one to another, asking if there is a place for Him. Oh, will not some of you take Him into your hearts?—D. L. Moody.

455. Last Chance.

He was a young cragsman away in the North; and one day, when gathering sea-birds' eggs, he let himself down by a rope, over the brow of a precipice, to a ledge far below. As he stood on that ledge the rope slipped, and there it swung far out above the abyss. It swung towards him again. My God! It is nearer now than it will ever be again; and that is not very near. What is to be done? Yonder, slowly the rope comes back. If you lose this chance the next will be worse. There is less hope if you lose this chance. He braced himself for the spring: he leaped, and laid hold of the rope; and he nigh fainted on the ledge as he bound himself again firmly to the rope to be swung up.

Christ has been near you, perhaps many a time nearer to you than He has been to-night—I do not deny that—but this is God's truth that Christ is nearer to you now than He ever will be again. If you let him go there is less chance, less hope for you to-morrow than to-night.—John Robertson.

456. Come Home!

S. H. Hadley, of the Water Street Mission, once met a boy in the street utterly ragged and miserable. He had stolen money from his father, and had run away from home. He was reaping the bitter wages of sin, and was penniless in the great city. Mr. Hadley advised him to go back to his father, but the boy said: "You don't know my father. He is a hard man; he will never forgive me."

"Well, come to the mission and stay to-night."

That very evening a letter went to the father, telling him that his missing boy was at the Water Street Mission, in destitute circumstances, and that he was sincerely sorry for his wrong-doing. The next morning a message flashed over the wire, saying: "My boy is forgiven; tell him to come home."

That is Christ's message to the wandering ones to-day. How the blessed word "Come," echoes through Holy Writ! But human hearts too seldom hear its music.—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

457. White Flags.

When the old Romans used to attack a city, it was sometimes their custom to set up at the gate a white flag, and if the garrison surrendered while that white flag was there, their lives were spared. After that the black flag was put up, and then every man was put to the sword. The white flag is up to-day; perhaps to-morrow the black flag will be elevated upon the pole of the law; and then there is no repentance or salvation either in this world or in that which is to come.—C. H. Spurgeon.

458. Last Invitation.

During my meeting in Augusta, Ga., a few years ago, at an hour like this, when I had reached the last service of the series and was just closing it, an old minister, one of the pastors, stepped to the front and said, "Brother Jones, before you pronounce the benediction, let me say a word." I said: "Go on, my brother; you always have the right of way in my meetings." The venerable old preacher looked like a veritable prophet of God as he stood before the great audience. He threw his forefinger out over the audience three times before he spoke, and then in the deepest emotion he said: "My brethren, this scene to-night reminds me of the scene in my boyhood days. My father's home was on the beach, and every morning when I came out on the porch to wash my face and hands my eyes swept the beach. One morning as I looked up and down the beach I saw that the storm of the night before had driven ashore an old ship that had been unloaded and deserted. I picked up my little cap and ran down to the beach and stood beside the old ship, as it lay careened on one side, high and dry on the sand. I looked upon it with boyish sympathy, and said: 'Poor old ship, I wonder if you will ever go out to sea again?' I waited anxiously for the spring tide. As the waters came out farther and farther and higher and higher on the old ship, I ran down to the shore. When I saw the old ship moving under the pressure of the waves, I threw up my little cap and said: 'Go out, old ship; go out, old ship; this is the high tide. You better go out with this tide, or you will fall to pieces on the shore.' But the spring tide receded and the old ship was left again high and dry. I said: 'Poor old ship, you ought to have gone out with that tide.'

"I waited anxiously for the full tide to come in. I ran down to the shore to watch the ship. I saw the high full tide come out around the old ship. I watched the water get higher and higher, until the ship began to move under its tide. I waved my little cap again and said: 'Please old ship, go out. This is the highest tide you will ever see. Go out, old ship, go out with this tide.' But the waters receded and the old ship was left again on the sand. I arose one morning after a stormy night. I stepped out on the porch and, as my eyes swept the shore, I saw that the old ship had crumbled into ten thousand pieces the night before. I ran down to the shore, and looking at the wreck said: 'Poor old ship. I told you so. You ought to have gone out with that tide.' My brethren, how like that picture is the scene of the last night of these services! I have sat here and watched the tide of God's love and mercy come over this audience night after night, and as the tide has risen higher and higher I have said in my heart, 'Go out, old sinner, go out with this tide.' I have seen you moved to tears under the influence of the gracious services, and as the tide rolled higher and higher I have cried in my heart again: 'Go out, old sinner, with this tide, go out.' But the services have closed and you did not move. I have watched the tide rise in the next service; I have seen you moved under its influence, and again I have cried in my heart: 'Go out, old sinner, go out with this tide.' But the tide has receded again and you have not moved. And now we have come to the last service, and I have watched the tide rise higher and higher, until I have said in my heart: 'This is the highest tide that ever struck Augusta. Go out, old sinner, go out with this tide, or you will be left to be shattered by the storm of death forever. God help you go out with this tide. Go out with this tide.' "—Sam Jones.

459. Why Will Ye Die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, your Maker, asks you—Why?
God, who did your being give,
Made you with Himself to live;
He the fatal cause demands,
Asks the work of His own hands—
Why, ye thankless creatures, why
Will ye cross His love and die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, your Saviour, asks you—Why?
He who did your souls retrieve,
Died Himself that ye might live!
Will ye let Him die in vain?
Crucify your Lord again?
Why, ye long-sought sinners, why
Will ye slight His grace and die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, the Spirit, asks you—Why?
He who all your lives hath strove,

Urged you to embrace His love;
Will ye not His grace receive?
Will ye still refuse to live?
Why, ye long-sought sinners, why
Will ye grieve your God, and die?

JUDGMENT.

460. Trying to Escape Judgment.

In a Polish Jew's burying-place there are a number of stones having no names or other inscriptions upon them. The idea is that at the last day the angel of eternal life will call the sleepers, reading the names upon the stones, the good to inherit bliss, the wicked to suffer. If the stone is however without a name, the sleeper may be passed over.—H. F. Sayles.

461. Ready for the Judgment.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced. A cause of terror to one person is a cause of joy to another. The baying of a hound on his track strikes dismay to a hunted robber in the woods. The same sound would give cheer to a lost child, when he knew it was his father's hound in search of him. It makes all the difference in the world at which end of the cannon you stand when it is being fired in battle. Its belching fire is the same in either case; but in one instance it is against your enemies, and in the other against you. There is no more terrible thought possible, to the opposer of God, than that the Lord reigneth, and that He is sure to put down all His enemies. There is no thought more comforting than this to the Christian believer. There was an under-witted but a faith-filled Scotch lad in this country, at the time of the great meteoric shower of November, 1833. When on every side men and women were that night in terror at the thought that the hour of final doom had come, this lad's mother aroused him from his sleep with a cry: "Sandy, Sandy, get up, will you? The Day of Judgment has come." Instantly the boy was alive to that call, and was on his feet, shouting: "Glory to God! I'm ready." When the loving followers of Jesus see signs of His appearance they rejoice with exceeding great joy.—The Clerical Library.

462.—God's Judgments Will Be Fulfilled.

As you stood some stormy day upon a sea cliff and marked the giant billow rise from the deep to rush on with foaming crest, and throw itself thundering on the trembling shore, did you ever fancy that you could stay its course and hurl it back to the depths of the ocean? Did you ever stand beneath the leaden, lowering cloud, and mark the lightning's leap as it shot and flashed, and think that you could grasp the bolt and change its path? Still more foolish and vain his thought who fancies that he can arrest and turn aside the purpose of God.—T. Guthrie, D.D.

463. Judgment-Day—Forgotten.

Is it not foolish to be living in this world without a thought of what you will do at last? A man goes into an inn, and as soon as he sits down he begins to order his wine, his dinner, his bed; there is no delicacy in season which he forgets to bespeak. He stops at the inn for some time. By-and-by the bill is forthcoming, and it takes him by surprise. "I never thought of that—I never thought of that!" "Why," says the landlord, "here is a man who is either a born fool or else a knave. What! never thought of the reckoning—never thought of settling with me!" After this fashion too many live. They eat, and drink, and sin, but they forget the inevitable hereafter, when for all deeds done in the body the Lord will bring us into judgment.—C. H. Spurgeon.

464. Hastening Judgment.

Archimedes was so fond of mathematical problems that when the city in which he was residing was stormed he did not know it. He heard not the whizz of the arrows that were shot into the market-place; he heard not the tramp of the armed men that marched to the forum of the conquered city. He was busy in his study with his triangles and squares and obstruse calculations. He heard not when the very street in which he was, was stormed; he heard not when the soldiers entered his house; and it was not till a soldier came and plucked him by the sleeve that the calculating philosopher lifted his head and realized that the soldier had business with him. "What had he to say to it?"

Ah, Glasgow business man, I would not be your friend if, God giving me a little light, I left you alone with your stocks and shares. You hear not the inrush of the great stream of hastening judgment; you hear not the step of the last enemy; and it is not till he will come into your office and pluck you by the sleeve, and you say: "My God! have you come already?"—John Robertson.

465. Fear of Judgment.

It is said an Hungarian king, finding himself on a certain day depressed and unhappy, sent for his brother, a good-natured but rather indifferent prince. To him the king said: "I am a great sinner and fear to meet God." Here was a king facing Job's question, "What shall I do when God riseth up? And when He visiteth, what shall I answer Him?" But the prince only laughed at him and treated the matter as a joke, just as some of you are doing now. This did not serve to relieve the royal unhappiness. When you get a vision of your guilt before God, you want help and your friends may laugh at your seriousness, but that will never answer the question. It was a custom in Hungary at that time that if the executioner at any time sounded a trumpet before a man's door, it was a signal that he was to be led forth to execution. The king sent the executioner in the dead of night to sound the fatal blast before his brother's door. The prince, awaking from sleep, realized its awful import. Quickly dressing, he stepped to the door and was seized by the executioner, and dragged pale and trembling into the king's presence. In an agony of terror he fell upon his knees before his brother and begged to know in what way he had offended him. "My brother," answered the king, "if the sight of a human executioner is so terrible to you, shall not I, having grievously offended God, fear to be brought before the judgment seat of Christ?" The sense of sin makes us all fear to face God. We are reminded in the Bible that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

466. Trapped!

A Boston shoplifter was caught in a comical way. He had stolen a muff in a department store, and ran with it to the escalators; but instead of boarding the one going down, in his haste he took the ascending stairway. He tried hard to run down, but was confronted by the ascending passengers, while all the time the merciless steps were rising. Finally, in spite of his frantic efforts, he was borne back to the head of the stairs again, where he found a policeman awaiting him.

This is just a picture of the difficult ways of sinners. They try to escape with their booty, but they find all the ways of providence running against them. Everything conspires to their discovery.

"Be sure your sin will find you out." The sinner is his own detective. If there is no policeman at hand, he will arrest himself. If the police-wagon is out of commission, he will run to the court-room. Remorse is sterner than any judge, and a guilty conscience is more terrible than any prison.

Be certain of this: If you sin, the entire universe will become an escalator, going the wrong way!—Amos R. Wells.

467. Swift-Winged Penalties.

It was always terribly dangerous to commit a crime. "Be sure your sin will find you out," is a saying more than three thousand years old. The truth it expresses is as old as the human race, as old as Cain and Eve.

But to-day, with all the resources of modern science trained upon wrongdoers, the ways of the transgressor are doubly hard. For example, here is a newspaper clipping telling how, down in Florida, two of the most recent marvels of science combined to bring a fugitive to justice. He was a hotel employee who had stolen some jewelry and had escaped with his spoil on board a boat. The boat got out to sea before the loss was discovered, and the presence of the thief on board was known. At once the hotel authorities, by means of the wireless telegraph, communicated with the ship's captain, made sure that the thief was on board, and learned that the boat was detained off Cape Florida by low tide. Then the pilot of a Curtiss flying-boat was called in, set off in the air in spite of a rainstorm, and dropped down in the sea alongside the boat in less than half an hour. A detective was on the hydroplane. He quickly made his arrest and flew back to the hotel with his prisoner, the entire flight occupying less than an hour.

With the empty air whispering his secret, and with pursuers dropping down upon him out of the clouds, the wrongdoer of to-day is certainly hard pressed.

Let us rejoice in it all. Let us continue to make it as difficult as possible to do wrong and as easy as possible to do right. Machinery will never make character, however; and, though all the mysteries of the physical world are laid bare, it still will remain true that "out of the heart are the issues of life."—Amos R. Wells.

468. Misunderstood Motive.

Ruskin and his publisher went to Switzerland with the purpose of building a châlet, but failed through local jealousy. Unable to see why any one should wish to secure a waste of barren rock, with pasturage only for a few goats in the summer, the authorities suspected that Ruskin had discovered a gold mine or a coal bed, owing to his frequent visits with a geological hammer and carrying a basket for the collection of mineralogical specimens. The price of the property he desired to obtain was, therefore, raised to such an exorbitant figure that he could not acquire it. A like misconception of Christ's motive has interfered with the fulfillment of His mission in many hearts and lives.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

469. A Poisoned Honour.

If we are to credit the annals of the Russian empire, there once existed a noble order of merit, which was greatly coveted by the princes and noblesse. It was, however, conferred only on the peculiar favourites of the Czar, or on the distinguished heroes of the kingdom. But another class shared in its honour in a very questionable form. Those nobles or favourites who either became a burden to the Czar or stood in his way received this decoration only to die. The pin-point was tipped with poison—and when the order was being fastened on the breast by the imperial messenger the flesh of the person was "accidentally" pricked. Death ensued, as next morning the individual so highly honoured with imperial favour was found dead in bed from apoplexy. Satan offered to confer a brilliant decoration upon Adam and Eve—"Ye shall be as gods." It was poisoned; the wages of sin is death. —W. Adamson.

470. Doom of Deserters.

In 1694 a law was passed by the Massachusetts Bay Colony to the effect that every settler who deserted a town when the Indians attacked it should forfeit all rights in that town. Thenceforth his property belonged to the State. He was not a fit person to live in a land of uncertainty and peril. Such a law may seem harsh, but it is only the force that will keep life from disintegration. In every state of moral conflict, in every time of spiritual crisis, earnest men are obliged to take that stand. Something must be done to crystallize the forces of good and evil. Things can not be held in solution any longer. Men must be one thing or the other. Not to choose is a choice. The act of neutrality is betrayal. Whosoever declines the trials, the obligations, the battles of righteousness, standing aside in its hour of danger and difficulty, striving to keep clear of embarrassments and entanglements, thereby flings away all right to any participation in the hour of triumph and joy.—Rev. George H. Ferris.

471. Regret of Lost Souls.

In the palace at Versailles, as if by the irony of fate, is a famous statue of Napoleon in exile. His noble brow is lowered in thought, his mouth is compressed, his chin is resting upon his breast, and his grand eye gazes into space as if fixed on some distant scene. There is something inexpressibly sad in that strong, pale face. It is said that the sculptor represented Napoleon at St. Helena, just before his death. He is looking back upon the field of Waterloo, and thinking how its fatal issue was the result of three hours' delay. Those three short hours seem ever to write on the walls of his memory—"The summer is ended, the harvest is passed!"—R. S. Barrett.

472. Personal Liberty.

Sages of old contended that no sin was ever committed whose consequences rested on the head of the sinner alone; that no man could do ill and his fellows not suffer. They illustrate it thus: A vessel sailing from Joppa carried a passenger who, beneath his berth, cut a hole through the ship's side. When the men of the watch ex-

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postulated with him, "What doest thou, O miserable man?" the offender calmly replied, "What matters it to you? The hole I have made lies under my own berth!" Manasseh's wickedness brought suffering and retribution upon the whole nation of Judah.—C. H. Spurgeon.

473. Debt Cancelled.

It is stated that, in St. Petersburg, a father's heart was well-nigh broken because of the prodigality of his son, who was addicted to the habit of gambling, and with that came the accompanying vices. At last the old father conceived the idea that what the boy needed was better surroundings, and so he set out to secure them. What a mistake this is and how many have made it! That is not what you need. This father of whom I speak secured his son's appointment in the army, but he went from bad to worse, until he had reached the end of it all. Completely discouraged, he was casting up his accounts and, when the overwhelming sum was known, in great desperation he wrote at the bottom of the column these words, "Who is to pay all this?"

The Emperor of Russia, going through the barracks to inspect the soldiers, passed this young man, who, with his head in his arms, had fallen asleep. The emperor, glancing at the figures before him on the table, read the question, and then, bending over, wrote one word, "Nicholas." And the story goes that that one man was free. I do not know whether this story is true, but I do know that if you enumerate all of your sins from the earliest recollection to the present moment, and beneath the sum of them all write this question, "Who is to pay all this?" there will be one name written in answer to it,

"Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus, blessed Jesus."
—J. Wilbur Chapman.

474. On the Rocks.

A splendid steamer was launched on Lake Champlain. She made her way safely across the lake and started back, when a storm came upon her, the engines were disabled and she drifted to the rocks. "Out with the anchor!" said the captain, and the command was obeyed, but still she drifted, and, although the anchor was down, she crashed against the rocks with an awful force, and all because the anchor chain was three feet too short. Your morality, so far as it goes, may be a good thing, but it does not reach the standard of God, nor can it until you are safely united to Christ; and if you have put him out of your life and stand alone in the midst of the rising floods, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?—J. Wilbur Chapman.

475. Desert of Traitors.

Benedict Arnold once asked a loyal captain what the Americans would do with him if they caught him. He replied, "I believe they would first cut off your lame leg, which was wounded in the cause of freedom and virtue at Quebec, and bury it with the honours of war, and afterwards hang the remainder of your body on a gibbet."—E. Foster.

476. Traitor Within.

A garrison is not free from danger while it has an enemy lodged within. You may bolt all your doors and fasten all your windows; but if the thieves have placed even a little child within doors, who can draw the bolts for them, the house is still unprotected. All the sea outside a ship cannot do it damage till the water enters within and fills the hold. Hence, it is clear, our greatest danger is from within. All the devils in hell and tempters on earth could do us no injury if there were no corruption in our natures. The sparks will fall harmlessly if there is no tinder. Alas, our hearts are our greatest enemies; they are the little home-born thieves. Lord, save me from that evil man, myself.—C. H. Spurgeon.

477.—Hand That Struck Jesus.

When Henry Martyn was at Shirez, in Persia, translating the New Testament, he seems to have been delighted with the following incident, which he notices in his journal (June 28, 1811): "The poor boy, while writing how one of the servants of the high priest struck the Lord in the face, stopped and said, 'Sir, did not his hand dry up.' "—C. Stanford, D.D.

478. Unrighteous Judgment.

General Grant, speaking of charges of cowardice, says: "The distant rear of an army engaged in battle is not the best place to judge what is going on. The stragglers in the rear are not to make us forget the intrepid soldiers in front." But how many judge the Christian Church and religion by its worst representatives!—H. O. Mackey.

479. Chickens Come Home to Roost.

Do you remember that poem of Southey's about Sir Ralph, the Rover? On the east of Scotland, near Arbroath, in the old days, a good man had placed a float with a bell attached on the dangerous Inchcape Rock, so that the mariners, hearing it, might keep away. This Sir Ralph, the Rover, in a moment of deviltry, cut away both float and bell. It was a cruel thing to do. Years passed. Sir Ralph roamed over many parts of the world. In the end he returned to Scotland. As he neared the coast a storm arose. Where was he? Where was the ship drifting? Oh, that he knew where he was! Oh, that he could hear the bell on the Inchcape Rock! But years ago, in his sinful folly, he, with his own hands, had cut it away. Hark! to that grating sound heard amid the storm, felt amid the breakers; the ship is struck; the rock penetrates her, she goes to pieces, and, with curses of rage and despair, the sinner's sin has found him out; he sinks to rise no more until the great day of judgment.—G. Litting, LL.B.

480. Avoid Hasty Judgment.

Judge not Christianity, even by its most perfect embodiment in the life of its disciples here. Do not judge the science of that organ-builder by that half-finished instrument in his workshop. There is but little in that to please the eye, and from it scarce a note can be evolved to charm the ear. Judge the organ-builder by the instrument as it stands in the great cathedral, pouring forth, by the touch of a master musician, pealing strains of music, electrifying the congregated thousands. Even so judge Christianity. Its organ is not half finished here in its workshop. Yonder, in the great cathedral of eternity, you will see it in perfection and feel the inspiration of its harmonies. — Dr. Thomas.

481. Judging Prematurely.

When Dr. Wayland was president of Brown University and professor of moral science, his eldest son, who was a senior, in reciting to him one day, drew from his father, by a question, the expression of a certain opinion. "The esteemed author of this book," said the young man, holding up his father's text-book on moral science which the class was using, "holds a different opinion." "The author of that book, my son," said Dr. Wayland quietly, "knows more now than he did ten years ago." The teacher of any science who does not know more now than he did ten years ago, who never finds occasion to modify and qualify and reshape his utterances, is probably a cheap and poor sort of teacher.—Washington Gladden.

482. Eternal Separation.

The Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, formerly president of Princeton College, America, was once on board a packet-ship, where, among other passengers, was a professed atheist. This unhappy man was very fond of troubling every one with his peculiar belief and of broaching the subject as often as he could get any one to listen to him. He did not believe in God and a future state, not he! By and by there came on a terrible storm, and the prospect was that all would be drowned. There was much consternation on board, but not one was so greatly frightened as the professed atheist. In this extremity he sought out the clergyman and found him in the cabin, calm and collected in the midst of danger, and thus addressed him: "Oh, Doctor Witherspoon! Doctor Witherspoon! We are all going! We have but a short time to stay. Oh, how the vessel rocks! We are all going! Don't you think we are, Doctor?" The doctor turned to him with a solemn look and replied in broad Scotch, "Nae doubt, nae doubt, man, we're a'ganging; but you and I dinna gang the same way."—W. Baxendale.

483. Accumulating Wrath.

It is related that some years ago, in a mountainous region on the continent of Europe, an avalanche of snow—an enormous mass of snow—came down from one of the overhanging rocks in such a vast body as to entirely dam up a river into which it fell. What was the effect it produced? As the river could no longer flow, it went on forming itself into an extensive lake — threatening, whenever it should burst through its snowy barrier, to carry desolation and ruin upon men and villages in the country beneath. The larger the quantity of water suspended, the greater would be its violence when it obtained its liberty; and so it proved. The devastation caused was said to be terrible in the extreme. It is thus with every unconverted sinner. The longer he lives, the greater is the amount of wrath he is accumulating, or treasuring up, against his day of destruction.—C. Clayton, M.A.

484. Judgment Without Mercy.

Between a mother and her daughter there had sprung up a serious quarrel. One house could not hold them. At length filial affection triumphed over pride, and the daughter repaired to her early home. No welcome met her at the door. She humbled herself to her mother—on bended knees imploring her forgiveness. She appealed to the bosom that had nursed her, but might as well have knocked on a coffin; there was no response. Nor—though imploring her by the mercies of God and entreating her to forgive as she desired to be forgiven—could I, called in as a peacemaker, bend that stubborn will. By and by to this lonely house came another visitor. Death, who would not be denied admittance, arrived, summoning her to a bar where they shall have judgment without mercy who have shown no mercy.—J. N. Norton, D.D.

485.—God Is a God of Judgment.

There was lately a judge in England, whom I need not be afraid to name as the honour of his robe and profession, namely, Judge Doddridge, whom they commonly called "the sleeping judge." Indeed, he had an affected drowsy posture on the Bench, inasmuch that many persons unacquainted with his custom, and having cases of concernment to be tried before him, have even given up all for lost, expecting no justice from a dormant judge, when he all the while did only retire himself within himself, the more seriously to consult with his own soul about the validity of what was alleged and proved unto him, as appeared afterwards by those oracles of law which he pronounced. Wicked men, in like manner, erroneously suppose God to be a sleeping God, but in due time He will assuredly confute their mistake.—Thomas Fuller.

486.—Retribution.

A bishop said to Louis XI, of France, "Make an iron cage for all those who do not think as we do—an iron cage in which the captive can neither lie down nor stand straight up." It was fashioned—the awful instrument of punishment. After a while the bishop offended Louis XI, and for fourteen years he was in that same cage, and could neither lie down nor stand up. It is a poor rule that will not work both ways. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

487. Portland Lighthouse.

In the Portland harbor, on the northern coast of the United States, there is a great arm that runs out into the sea, and on the end of that arm stands the Portland lighthouse. That lighthouse has a stationary light, and, standing far out in the sea, it warns the vessels or guides them as they come. Whenever a vessel is putting on toward Portland, that light flashes red in three directions and white only in one. If your boat is coming from one direction, the Portland light flashes its red light and says, "Danger." If your boat is coming from another direction, the Portland light flashes back red and says, "Danger." If your boat is coming from still another direction, it flashes out, "Danger." But if your boat is coming in the right direction, the Portland light flashes white, and in the light of the white gleam you can make your way safely into the harbor.

That is like God's word. It is judgment, judgment, judgment, from Genesis to Revelation, but the book of Genesis starts out with the message, "Where art thou?" And the book of Revelation closes with the message, "Come, come, come. Let him that heareth say, Come." Then, as if some poor, lost, sorrowing man might think he was not included, Christ stretches out His arms of mercy and says, "Whosoever will, let him come."—J. Wilbur Chapman.

488. No Hiding from God.

It was said of the Roman Empire under the Cæsars that the whole world was only one great prison for Cæsar, for if any man offended the emperor it was impossible for him to escape. If he crossed the Alps, could not Cæsar find him out in Gaul? If he sought to hide himself in the Indies, even the swarthy monarchs there knew the power of the Roman arms, so that they could give no shelter to a man who had incurred imperial vengeance. And yet, perhaps, a fugitive from Rome might have prolonged his miserable life by hiding in the dens and caves of the earth. But, oh, sinner, there is no hiding from God.—C. H. Spurgeon.

489. Once Too Often.

A tamer of wild beasts in London had a boa-constrictor, cared for by him from the time when it was little till it had grown to an enormous size. At the close of his exhibition the animal glided forward on the stage and, at a word of command, rose upon him fold after fold till at length the man was hidden from sight and the horrible head of the monster waved aloft in the air. The audience began to cheer wildly, when suddenly they were still with horror. A scream of agony had come from the center of that serpent mass, and then, as all listened appalled, they heard the bones of the tamer crack, one after another, and all was still. The serpent had become the master. He had been toyed with once too often. That is what sin does for its victim.—Addison P. Foster, D.D.

490. You Can't Rub It Out!

"Don't write it there," said a little newspaper boy to a dandified youth, whom in the waiting-room of a railway station he saw about to scratch something with his diamond ring on a mirror that was hanging on the wall. "Don't write there!" "Why not?" "Because you can't rub it out!" So would I have you, my unconverted hearer, to be careful what you write, in your words and actions, on the tablets of your memory. You can't rub it out; and as you think of that surely you will agree with me that "the time past of your lives may suffice to have wrought the will of the Gentiles."—W. M. Taylor, D.D.

491. Sin and Judgment.

Recent discoveries have revealed the carcasses of prehistoric animals thrown out at the foot of a Siberian glacier. These animals were preserved unchanged, unseen, and unknown, for untold centuries, beneath the frozen mud and the solid ice of the never-hasting, never-resting, ever-moving glacier. And when, at last, these long-preserved carcasses came out to the light and warmth and sun, they sent forth their horrid stench. Thus sin may be buried under the mud of materialism, and be frozen in indifference, and hidden in oblivion for years and centuries and cycles, but the on-moving glacier of time will at last reveal them to the light and glory of the judgment day, and then will they stink in the nostrils of God, and of angels, and of all the assembled multitudes.—R. S. Barrett.

492. Vengeance of God.

Doré's great picture of the punishment of Heliodorus, who was dispatched by King Seleucus to capture the incalculable treasures which were laid up in the Jewish temple, will illustrate the vengeance which God will mete out to the enemies of purity. Though the whole city was in an agony of apprehension, and the high priest was in the deepest distress, the royal officer advanced to plunder the splendid temple. Suddenly a horse with a terrible rider, clad in golden armor, rushed into the courts and trampled upon Heliodorus with his forefeet. Two young men of great strength and beauty, and gloriously attired, stood by the rider and scourged the intruder with great violence. At the sight of the awful apparition Heliodorus fell half-dead upon the pavement, and was carried senseless from the precincts of the sanctuary. Thus, so tradition has it, by supernatural interposition was the holy temple delivered of its defiler. Thus we may be assured by Divine help, if God be invoked, shall iniquity be expelled from the life it has seized for destruction.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

493. God's Anger.

I have read that a frown of Queen Elizabeth killed Sir Christopher Hatton, the Lord Chancellor of England. What, then, shall the frowns of the King of nations do? If the rocks rend, the mountains melt and the foundations of the earth tremble under His wrath, how will the ungodly sinner appear when He comes in all His royal glory to take vengeance on all that knew Him not, and that obeyed not His glorious Gospel?—Charles Bradbury.

494. Final Separation of Mankind.

In Jersey City, over from New York, there is one of the largest distributing centres of passenger traffic in the world. All the passengers for the various ramifying routes are gathered together in the waiting-hall, with the doors closed, Suddenly these doors are flung open, and in a high, shrill key the railway attendant calls out the route of the train that is about to start and goes over the names of the big towns on that route, in a roll long enough to make him need breath when he has finished it. "Philadelphia," &c., &c., and you see passengers start from their seats among the throng and hurry to the exit the railway man indicates. They are bound for Philadelphia, and the rest. The doors close, and the throng inside the hall settle down again. After some time the doors are flung open again, and the same sing-song of the route and the list of stops, "Chicago and St. Louis," and you see another company of passengers make their way out to the waiting train. They are those going to Chicago and St. Louis. Again the doors close, and again they are flung to the wall, and this time the list of names the fellow calls out ends with "Montreal," and, when I heard that, I started up and made for the door; I was going to Montreal. In a few hours they that were one company inside the waiting-hall of the station of Jersey City are separated by hundreds of miles, and never all to meet again. That is like this world. We are gathered together in one waiting-hall of the station of time, and those sky-doors have yet to be flung open, and the voice of God, the last trump, is to burst on every mortal ear, and companies and groups have to separate and gather according to their destinations for eternity. Here passengers for heaven; there passengers for hell. You cannot tell in the waiting-hall what passengers are bound the glad one way or what passengers are bound the sad other way. The outward appearance is all we can see. He that looketh upon and knoweth the heart is the Lord. Some presumptuous folk would try to erect a dividing barricade in the waiting-hall, and divide it into two sections, whose partitions would be covered in regulation form with ecclesiastical jagged broken glass, mostly coloured, I know. But it will not do; it will not do. Leave the division to the Divider Himself! Judge not, but wait till the shout of the archangel of the coming King is heard through the suddenly flung open doors—in a moment, in that moment, in that twinkling of an eye, at that last trump. There are only two groups, and two departures, and two destinations from this waiting-hall of time. How fitting the prayer, "Gather not my soul with sinners."—John Robertson.

495. Vacant Niche.

I was once a pastor at Schuylerville, N. Y., where on the Burgoyne surrender grounds stands a celebrated monument. It is beautiful to look upon. On one side of it in a niche is General Schuyler, and on the other side, if I remember correctly, General Gates; on the third, in the same sort of a niche, another distinguished general is to be seen, but on the fourth the niche is vacant. When I asked the reason I was told that "It is the niche which might have been filled by Benedict Arnold had he not been a traitor."—J. Wilbur Chapman.

496. Settlement in Full.

A farmer once wrote to an editor:

"Dear Sir:

"I have been trying an experiment. I have a field of corn which I ploughed on Sunday. I planted it on Sunday. I cut it and hauled it to the barn on Sunday. And I find that I have more corn to the acre than has been gathered by any of my neighbors this October."

The former sent his letter, sure that the editor could have no answer to the sneer implied in it. But imagine his feelings when in the next issue of the paper he read his own letter in print, and at the end of it this one sentence: "God does not make full settlement in October."—Selected.

497. Degrees of Punishment.

The legend of St. Macarius of Alexandria runs thus: "One day as Macarius wandered among those ancient Egyptian tombs, wherein he had made himself a dwelling-place, he found the skull of a mummy, and, turning it over with his crutch, he inquired to whom it belonged; and it replied, 'To a pagan.' And Macarius, looking into the empty eye, said, 'Where, then, is thy soul?' And the head replied, 'In hell.' Macarius asked, 'How deep?' And the head replied, 'The depth is greater than the distance from heaven to earth.' Then Macarius asked, 'Are there any deeper than thou art?' The skull replied, 'Yes; the Jews are deeper still.' And Macarius asked, 'Are there any deeper than the Jews?' To which the head replied, 'Yes, in sooth! for the Christians whom Jesus Christ hath redeemed, and who show in their actions that they despise His doctrine, are deeper still."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

498. Everlasting Damnation.

A venerable minister preached a sermon on the subject of eternal punishment. On the next day it was agreed among some thoughtless young men that one of them should endeavor to draw him into a dispute, with the design of making a jest of him and of his doctrine. The wag accordingly went, and commenced by saying, "I believe there is a small dispute between you and me, sir, and I thought I would call this morning and try to settle it." "Ah," said the clergyman, "what is it?" "Why," replied the wag, "you say that the wicked will go into everlasting punishment, and I do not think they will." "Oh, if that is all," answered the minister, "there is no dispute between you and me. If you turn to Matthew 25:46, you will find that the dispute is between you and the Lord Jesus Christ, and I advise you to go immediately and settle it with Him."—W. Baxendale.

499. Indelible Ink.

Down in the Southland the colored people have a song which runs like this:

"He sees all we do,
He hears all we say,
My God's a-writing all the time."

But you are writing, too. In the British museum there is a piece of stone, about half the size of my Bible, which is probably five thousand years old, and in the middle of the stone there is the mark of a bird's foot. Five thousand years ago, when the stone was soft, the bird put its foot upon the stone, and the mark has been there ever since. My God is writing all the time.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

500. Past Redemption Point.

When Mr. Aitken was in this country he told an anecdote concerning a vessel on the Niagara River which had in some way become loosed from its moorings and was drifting down toward the cataract. There is a point above the Falls called "Past Redemption Point," and as the vessel came near to that point those that were watching it from the shore trembled. Nothing had ever passed that point before and been rescued. The little boat came drifting on, and those that were on board were unable to extricate themselves from their awful danger, until she passed the fatal point and they had given up all hope. Just as those on board were about to commend themselves to such mercy as they might find in their dying hour, the one who had charge of the little craft started, and a look of eager expectation came upon his face; and then he gave some orders, and immediately the sails were raised upon the little craft. He had thought that he felt upon his cheek a faint breath of air blowing up the river. At first it did not seem to make the slightest difference with the sails, but as the breeze grew fresher the sails began to fill out; and then occurred a terrible battle, the wind against the current, until at last—the might of the current remaining the same in power and the breeze increasing in force—the little vessel was held still for a moment; and then, as the breeze quickened and grew mightier and mightier against the sails, the wind triumphed and the little boat moved,, almost inch by inch at first, fighting her way, until at last they were able to guide it in safety into the calm water out toward the great lake.

Oh, man, have you been heedless and careless, and drifting on the tide of worldliness, the tide of selfishness, the tide of avarice, the tide of unbelief, the tide of simple indifference; and has it been bringing you nearer and nearer to the fatal plunge? In God's name, to-night spread every sail to catch the wind that blows from heaven, that it may touch your heart, your conscience, and your life, and bring you into the desired haven.—B. Fay Mills.

501. An Invisible Painter.

A rich landlord once cruelly oppressed a poor widow. Her son, a little boy of eight years, saw it. He afterwards became a painter and painted a life-likeness of the dark scene. Years afterwards he placed it where the man saw it; he turned pale, trembled in every joint and offered any sum to purchase it that he might put it out of sight. There is an invisible painter drawing on the canvas of the soul a life-likeness reflecting correctly all the passions and actions of our spiritual history on earth. Eternity will reveal them to every man. We must meet our earth-life again.—J. C. F. Pittman.

LOVE.

502. "Love Never Faileth."

When Romney, the great English artist, was young he fell violently in love with a young lady of the North of England and they were married. But his real passion was his work. One day he heard that Sir Joshua Reynolds had said that it was a pity that Romney had married, as he had the talents for greatness as a painter, and he would not get very far if he was burdened with a wife. Straightway Romney left his young wife and came down to London. His work was his one passion now. He made good! Portraits of the first people of the land came from his brush, landscapes, that in this day are worth many, many thousands. He was a lion in London for a time. Then he grew old and ill and, gathering his effects together, went back to his wife in the North, and she took him in and nursed him tenderly till he was laid away. And some one has rightfully said that the spirit manifested by that wife was worth more than all the pictures that Romney ever produced. We treat Jesus that way. We forsake Him and then plan to get back and die in His arms. But He never forsakes us, but loves us and abides with us through all our years.—Note in the Cambridge edition of Tennyson's Poems.

503. Sacrifice of Love.

Who has not read with thrilling interest the story of old curfew? A young soldier for some offence was condemned to die, and the time of his death was fixed "at the ringing of the curfew." Naturally such a doom would be fearful and bitter to one in the years of his hope and prime; but to this unhappy youth death was doubly terrible, since he was soon to marry a beautiful young lady, whom he had long loved. The lady, who loved him ardently in return, had used her utmost efforts to avert his fate, pleading with the judges and even with Cromwell himself; but all in vain. In her despair she tried to bribe the old sexton not to ring the bell, but she found that to be impossible.

The hour for the execution drew near. The preparations were completed. The officers of the law brought forth the prisoner and waited, while the sun was setting, for the signal from the distant bell-tower.

To the wonder of everybody curfew did not ring! Only one human being at that moment knew the reason. The poor girl, half wild with the thought of her lover's peril, had rushed unseen up the winding stairs, and climbed the ladders into the belfry-loft, and seized the tongue of the bell. The old sexton was in his place, prompt to the fatal moment. He threw his weight upon the rope, and the bell, obedient to his practised hand, reeled and swung to and fro in the tower. But the brave girl kept her hold, and no sound issued from its metallic lips. Again and again the sexton drew the rope, but with desperate strength the young heroine held on. Every moment made her position more fearful; every sway of the mighty bell threatened to fling her through the high tower window; but she would not let go.

At last the sexton went away. Old and deaf, he had not noticed that the curfew gave no peal. The brave girl descended from the belfry, wounded and trembling. She hurried from the church to the place of execution. Cromwell himself was there, and just as he was sending to demand why the bell was silent, she saw him—

"And her brow,
Lately white with sorrow, glows with hope and courage now.
At his feet she told her story, showed her hands all bruised and torn,
And her young face, still haggard with the anguish it had worn,
Touched his heart with sudden pity, lit his eyes with misty light—
'Go; your lover lives,' cried Cromwell; 'Curfew shall not ring tonight.'"

Think you, that this young man, redeemed by that sacrifice of love from the clutches of the law, would regard any service to the fair woman who redeemed him a hardship? Nay, he would have been willing to have laid his life upon the altar for her.

Now, let us listen to another story of love.

The scene is laid at Calvary. Jesus is upon the cross. The brow once crowned with glory is now crowned with thorns. The hands so often outstretched in love and mercy are now pinioned to the cross. The heart that throbbed and ached with human sorrow is now pierced with a spear. Oh, it is a sad moment in the history of the world! The earth trembles, the mountains quake, and the sun vails itself in darkness, for God's Son is dying.

But listen! "It is finished! It is finished! It is finished!"

The great plan of redemption, born in the heart of love, has now received its finishing touch, and God and the world stand reconciled.

Oh, dear friends, this was for us! Shall we not respond, not only with our hearts, but with our substance—yea, with all that we have—to gladden His dear heart and spread His kingdom from pole to pole?—L. G. Broughton.

504. Reassurance of Love.

On the shores of the Adriatic the wives of fishermen, whose husbands have gone far out upon the deep, are in the habit at eventide of going down to the seashore and singing, as female voices only can, the first stanza of a beautiful hymn; after they have sung it, they listen till they hear borne by the wind across the desert sea the second stanza, sung by their gallant husbands as they are tossed by the gale upon the waves. Perhaps, if we could listen, we, too, might hear on this desert world of ours, some sound, some whisper borne from afar to remind us that there is a heaven and a home.—Dr. John Cumming.

505. Condition of Adoption.

There was a ripple of excitement all through the orphanage, for a great lady had come to take little Jane home with her. The girl herself was bewildered with the thought. "Do you want to go with me and be my child?" the lady asked in gentle tones. "I don't know," said Jane timidly. "But I'm going to give you beautiful clothes, and a lot of things—a room of your own, with a beautiful bed and table and chairs." After a moment's silence the little one said, anxiously: "But what am I to do for—for all this?" The lady burst into tears. "Only to love me and be my child," she said, as she folded the little girl in her arms.

God adopts us, protects us, and gives us an inheritance in glory. All He asks in return is that we should love Him and be His children.—Children's Record.

506. Misrepresentation of God's Love.

There's a wideness in God's mercy
  Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice
  Which is more than liberty.

For the love of God is broader
  Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
  Is most wonderfully kind.

But we make His love too narrow
  By false limits of our own,
And we magnify His strictness
  With a zeal He will not own.
—R. F. Horton, D.D.

507. Power of Love.

One day, one of the gigantic eagles of Scotland carried away an infant, which was sleeping by the fireside in its mother's cottage. The whole village ran after it; but the eagle soon perched itself upon the loftiest eyrie, and every one despaired of the child being recovered. A sailor tried to climb the ascent, but his strong limbs trembled, and he was at last obliged to give up the attempt. A robust Highlander, accustomed to climb the hills, tried next, and even his limbs gave away, and he was in fact precipitated to the bottom. But at last a poor peasant woman came forward. She put her feet on one shelf of the rock, then on a second, then on a third; and in this manner, amid the trembling hearts of all who were looking on, she rose to the very top of the cliff, and at last, whilst the breasts of those below were heaving, came down step by step, until, amid the shouts of the villagers, she stood at the bottom of the rock with the child on her bosom. Why did that woman succeed when the strong sailor and the practised Highlander had failed? Why, because between her and the babe there was a tie; that woman was the mother of the babe. Let there be love to Christ and to souls in your hearts, and greater wonders will be accomplished.—Manual of Anecdotes.

508. Lack of Love.

A friend of mine employed for five years an ex-convict who had seemed to be converted, and during that time this man handled twenty-four thousand dollars a year of his employer's money without the misappropriation of a cent. At the close of that time my friend, not having need for him, told his whole story to a gentleman in another city who needed such a helper, and who received this former convict into his employ. Inside of three weeks he was arrested for stealing from his new employer. And when my friend heard of it he went to see him in the jail and said to him: "Ike, how is it that when you worked for me you could be trusted with anything, and that as soon as you came into this new employment you went back to your old dishonest life?" The man burst into tears and said: "I couldn't help it. He suspected me, and I had to steal."—B. Fay Mills.

509. Love of God.

When Bonplau, the botanist, climbed one of the loftiest peaks of the Andes he found it a volcano. The rim of the crater was covered with scoriæ, and everything that looked like blasting and desolation, but just in one little crevice there was a tiny bright flower. There it grew in beauty. Like enough the seed had dropped from a bird. The shower had fallen, the sun had shone, and the flower had grown there, waving in the wind amidst surrounding desolation. The flower growing there on the rim of that fire funnel is something like the grand and beautiful love of God. He has planted flowers on the rim of perdition, on the very edge of that rim.—S. Coley.

510. Captured by Friends.

An escaped prisoner in the Civil War wandered for many days and nights, seeking the Union lines. At last, in the dusk of the early twilight, he came to a camp which he supposed belonged to the Confederates. Before he knew it he was surrounded by the pickets and captured, to be hurried back to prison, as he thought. But what was his surprise and joy, on looking a little closer, to find that it was the Union blue, and not the Confederate gray, that the soldiers wore! He had been captured by his friends. When he thought that his friends were far away they were all about him. Oh, wanderer, and fugitive from God, lift up your eyes; the hosts of your friends surround you! God is near you. Jesus Christ is by your side. The Holy Spirit is hovering over you. The opening of your spiritual eyes will reveal it all.—Francis E. Clark.

511. Loving our Guide.

The relation resulting from the intercourse of an Alpine traveller with his guide, writes Dr. Parkhurst, is not exactly like anything else. The one whom you had employed in this service would henceforth stand to you quite apart from other men. The peculiar quality that is in your intimacy has not resulted merely from your walking so long together; nor has it come because of your fellowship with one another in peril, or perhaps even in suffering. You learn to know your guide by obeying him, and you learn to love him by committing yourself to him and trusting him. Something about our Divine Guide, Jesus Christ, you can learn from the Scriptures; something, too, you can gather from the testimony of other men. But if you want to know Him you must obey Him, and if you want to love Him you must first trust Him.—Christian Endeavour Times.

512. Response to God's Love.

The venerable Dr. Harry Rainy —in his old age a picturesque and familiar figure in the streets of Glasgow with his Highland plaid, his snow-white hair and his furrowed face—died, loved and honoured. In his last years he had a beautiful gentleness of spirit, and, regarding this, his son, Principal Rainy, in one of his delightful hours of reminiscence, told me an incident which, though it has a sacred privacy about it, I shall venture to repeat. Old Professor Rainy had one night a strange dream. He dreamed that he was holding converse with some August Personage, and gradually it became clear that This was none other than the Holy Spirit of God. The Divine Spirit seemed to be speaking of the means which would make His human auditor a holy man. God had used mercy and also discipline and yet it all had been insufficient. "The only thing," so the Transcendent Speaker seemed to say, "is that you should be brought to realize more clearly how much God loves you." And from that time—"you may make of it what you will," said the Principal —his father had a peace and joy he never had before.—P. C. Simpson.

513. Love of God Never Fails.

Niagara stopped once! Owing to an ice dam thrown across the river, the waters failed, the rainbow melted, the vast music was hushed. But there has been no moment in which the love of God has failed toward the rational universe, when its eternal music has been broken, or the rainbow has ceased to span the throne. There never will be such a moment. The crystal tide flows richly, and flows forever.—W. L. Watkinson.

514. Christ's Love an Individual Love.

The great trouble is that people take everything in general, and do not take it to themselves. Suppose a man should say to me: "Moody, there was a man in Europe who died last week and left five million dollars to a certain individual." "Well,' I say, 'I don't doubt that; it's rather a common thing to happen," and I don't think anything more about it. But suppose he says: "But he left the money to you." Then I pay attention; I say: "To me?" "Yes, he left it to you." I become suddenly interested. I want to know all about it. So we are apt to think Christ died for sinners; He died for everybody, and for nobody in particular. But when the truth comes to me that eternal life is mine, and all the glories of heaven are mine, I begin to be interested.—D. L. Moody.

515. Venture of Love.

When Napoleon, with his army of invasion, lay at Boulogne, an English sailor, who had been captured, tried to escape in a little raft or skiff which he had patched together with bits of wood and the bark of trees. Hearing of his attempt, the First Consul ordered him to be brought into his presence and asked if he really meant to cross the channel in such a crazy contrivance. "Yes, and if you will let me I am still willing to try." "You must have a sweetheart whom you are so anxious to revisit." "No," said the young man, "I only wish to see my mother, who is old and infirm." "And you shall see her," was the reply, "and take to her this money from me; for she must be a good mother who has such an affectionate son." And orders were given to send the sailor with a flag of truce on board the first British cruiser which came near enough. Napoleon was always eager to declare his own obligations to his high-spirited and courageous mother, the beautiful Letizia Ramolini; but the difficulty would be to find any man of mark who has not made the same avowal.—James Hamilton.

516. The Mystery of God's Love.

A gentleman who thought Christianity was merely a heap of puzzling problems, said to an old minister, "That is a very strange statement, 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.'" "Very strange," replied the minister; "but what is it that you see most strange about it?" "Oh, that part, of course, about hating Esau." "Well, sir," said the minister, "how wonderfully are we made and how differently constituted! The strangest part of all to me is that He could ever have loved Jacob. There is no mystery so glorious as the mystery of God's love."—N. T. Anecdotes.

517. Patience of Love.

The late Bishop Simpson relates a remarkable instance of the work of a young man in America who started an institution for the care and improvement of poor imbecile children. Among those brought to him was a little boy, five years of age, who had never made an intentional act, had never spoken a word, and had never given any look of recognition to a friend. He lay on the floor, a mass of flesh, without even ability to turn himself over. Such was the student brought to this school. The teacher made effort after effort to get the slightest recognition from his eye, or to produce the slightest voluntary movement; but in vain. Unwilling, however, to yield, he had the boy brought to his room, and he lay down beside him every day for half-an-hour, hoping that some favourable indication might occur. One day, at the end of six months of unavailing effort, he was unusually weary, and did not read. He soon discovered that the child was uneasy, and was trying to move himself a little. The thought flashed across his mind: "He misses the sound of my voice." He brought his mouth near the child's hands, and, after repeated efforts, the little one succeeded in placing his fingers on the teacher's lips, as if to say, "Make that sound again." The teacher felt that from that moment his success was assured. And, as the narrative goes on to relate, only five years after that time the child stood on a platform, in the presence of interested spectators, and answered with ready accuracy the questions of a public examination. The patience of love had conquered.—T. F. Lockyer.

518. Love Waiting.

Passing the prison of one of our large cities early in the morning I saw what seemed to be a mother in a humble cart from a distant village, waiting at the entrance, for the release, perhaps, of her son that day from his term of bondage. There were the vacant seat beside her, the little basket of dainty food, the change of outer garments, and her tearful, eager glances at the door, all telling, very affectionately, to how much love the prisoner was about to be liberated, and how readily he would be transported to his far-off home. There was only a step for him from exile and shame to the parent's resources, the parent's dwelling, the parent's arms, the parent's joy—all these anxiously waiting for the moment of his discharge.—Charles New.

519. Call of Love.

A little girl had asked her father what faith meant, and he had told her to wait for his answer. One day he was doing something in a cellar, the entrance to which was a trap-door in a passage. The child called out to him, "May I come down to you, father?" "Yes," he said. The little girl was going to descend, when she found that the ladder had been taken away. "I can't get down," she called out; "there is no ladder." "Jump down," her father answered, "and I will catch you." The child hesitated; she could not see her father, and below her everything seemed dark. "But I can't see you, father; I can't see anything," she said. "I can see you," was the reply; "jump, and I shall be sure to catch you. My arms are wide open now." The child hesitated no longer; she was sure that her father was there ready to catch her, though she could not see him. She jumped into the darkness and was safely caught.—J. R. Gregory.

520. Why He Loved Her.

A young woman who runs a power sewing machine for fifty hours a week in a factory tells the following story of her married life: "My husband, left an orphan, never had a chance to go to school or learn a trade. He is a teamster and makes very little money, but he loves me enough to trust me with all he earns. My husband does not go to saloons or places of that sort, and he never goes out for pleasure without me. Do you think it hurts me that he can't give me fine clothes when every day he tells me I am the best thing God ever gave him? Every night he kisses my hands that have worked so hard all day. We have been married over a year and never a cross word. I did not know any one could be so happy. Do you think I mind working to help a man like that? His love makes everything worth while. Here is a man, ignorant of books, with no business training, yet possessing the rare faculty that guides his home-life in ways of happiness and peace.—The Expositor.

521. Melted by Love.

A young man, the only son of a New England farmer in moderate circumstances, fell into ways of dissipation at college. Contracting gambling debts which he could not meet, he was arrested for forging the name of a friend of his father. Tried, convicted, sentenced, he escaped from the deputy on the way to prison and hid himself in the far west. The father toiled on; secured money to cover the forgery, got a pardon from the governor, and giving several thousand dollars to a private detective —the former deputy—he gave him a note for his son and sent him west to find him. He did find him, in a San Francisco gambling hell.

The room in which he was found had but one entrance, so that escape could only be made by the door through which the detective entered. No sooner had he come into the room than the young man recognized him, and naturally supposing he had been hunted down at last, and that the officer had come to arrest him and carry him back to prison and to increased punishment, he determined, if possible, to escape; and so, rising from his seat at the gambling table, he made a rush for the door, striking the old sheriff a fearful blow in his passage, which felled him to the floor; but the officer succeeded in keeping his grip upon him until he could speak.

"Stop, John! I have not come to arrest you, but to put into your hands the governor's pardon, and to take you home to your father, who sent me to find you."

This communication, which he at once accepted as true, arrested further attempts to escape. Standing still, he received the parchment document on which the pardon was engrossed. Having read it, he tore the document up and flung the fragments on the floor, remarking, with miserable bitterness:

"I do not care for his pardon—it does indeed remit the penalties of the law, and so far sets me free; but it can not restore my ruined character; it can not undo the misery I have brought upon my father, nor restore me to my place in society. I will not go home to face my father's just anger, and live as an outcast in the community where I was born."

"But, John," said the ex-sheriff, "that is not all; I have a letter from your father which he bade me put into your own hands; here it is." And he handed him the letter.

The young man took it and looked long upon the superscription, and then broke the seal. Out of it fell the cancelled note, with the bank cashier's receipt for payment in full, and the contents of the letter were as follows:

"My Dear Boy: The miserable debt is paid; the governor has pardoned you. Your old father has never ceased to love and long for you, and freely forgives you. Come home to me."

For a moment the young man gazed upon the letter he held in his hands; and then, for the first time in years, his heart was touched. His lips trembled, tears came into his eyes, and, falling upon a chair, he sobbed out his sorrow and repentance; then, looking up, he reached out his hand to the ex-sheriff and said:

"I will go back with you. Take me to my father!"

Oh, my friends, this is but a poor parable of what the Gospel is!—Dr. George F. Pentecost.

MINISTERS.

522. Be an Evangelistic Preacher. God Will Help.

A father, sitting in his study, sent his little boy upstairs to fetch a book that had been forgotten. The boy was long gone, and after a time the father thought he heard the sound of sobbing on the stairs. He went out, and at the top of the staircase he saw his son crying bitterly, with the great book he had tried to lift and carried so far, lying at his feet. "Oh, father!" the lad cried, "I cannot carry it; it is too heavy for me!" In a moment the father ran up the stairs, and, stooping down, took up both the little lad and the book in his strong arms, and carried them down to the room below. Before he reached it his child's tears were all dried up, and he was leaning on his father's arm, the burden and the trouble gone.—R. S. Barrett.

523. Making of an Evangelistic Preacher.

During the great Welsh revival it is said a minister was marvellously successful in his preaching. He had but one sermon, but under it hundreds of men were saved. Far away from where he lived, in a lonely valley, news of this wonderful success reached a brother preacher. Forthwith he became anxious to find out the secret of this success. He started out, and walked the long and weary road, and, at length, reaching the humble cottage where the good minister lived, he said: "Brother, where did you get that sermon?" He was taken into a poorly furnished room and pointed to a spot where the carpet was worn shabby and bare, near a window that looked out towards the solemn mountains, and the minister said: "Brother, that is where I got that sermon. My heart was heavy for men. One evening I knelt there, and cried for power to preach as I had never preached before. The hours passed until midnight struck, and the stars looked down on a sleeping valley and the silent hills; but the answer came not, so I prayed on until at length I saw a faint grey shoot up in the east; presently it became silver, and I watched and prayed until the silver became purple and gold, and on all the mountain crests blazed the altar fires of the new day; and then the sermon came, and the power came, and I lay down and slept, and arose and preached, and scores fell down before the fire of God; that is where I got that sermon."—G. Campbell Morgan.

524. Value of Preachers.

Longfellow I had learned to love from my youth up; Holmes ever since the mystery of the three Johns and the three Toms caught my schoolboy fancy, years ago, has been to me a monolith of wisdom. And naturally the attraction of these names was a powerful inducement to me to spend my last days (of the first visit to America) in quiet worship at shrines so revered and beloved. But some eight hundred miles off, away by Lake Erie, were two men who were more to me than philosopher or poet, and it only required a moment's thought to convince me that for me at least a visit to America would be much more than incomplete without a visit to Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey. It was hard, I must say, to give up Longfellow, but I am one of those who think that the world is not dying for poets so much as for preachers.—Henry Drummond.

525. Anxieties of Pastoral Care.

St. Francis, reflecting on a story he heard of a mountaineer in the Alps, who had risked his life to save a sheep, says: "Oh, God, if such was the earnestness of this shepherd in seeking for a mean animal, which had probably been frozen on the glazier, how is it that I am so indifferent in seeking my sheep?"

526. Prayer for Ministers.

John Livingston, of Scotland, once spent a whole night with a company of his brethren in prayer for God's blessing, all of them together besieging the throne; and the next day, under his sermon, five hundred souls were converted. All the world has heard how the audience of the elder Pres. Edwards was moved by his terrible sermon on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"; some of them even grasping hold of the pillars of the sanctuary, from feeling that their feet were actually sliding into the pit. But the secret of that sermon's power is known to but very few. Some Christians in that vicinity (Enfield, Mass.) had become alarmed lest, while God was blessing other places, He should in anger pass them by; and so they met on the evening preceding the preaching of that sermon, and spent the whole of the night in agonizing prayer.—Dr. H. C. Fish.

527.—Ministers Need Encouragement.

I know of a parsonage to which the death-angel came, and took to heaven a faithful and beloved under-shepherd. The kind members of his flock went to that desolate home, and could not say enough in praise of him whom they did truly love. A volume of his sermons was published, and widely circulated. Then the broken-hearted wife said: "Oh, if they had only said one-half to him which they now say to me, how it would have lightened his labour and rejoiced his heart!" I know of another parsonage to which a pastor returned, after a Sabbath of extreme mental fatigue, and of intensely loving work for his people. The almost agonizing tone with which he said: "Not one kind word to-day, and I've done my very best," would have met a kind response from every parishioner's heart, could all have heard it. "Not one kind word to-day." I know a pastor to whom a parishioner said one Sunday evening: "I have been benefited by both sermons to-day." When his pastor replied: "It always helps me to hear that," this warm-hearted man said: "If I always told you when I feel benefited by your sermons, it would be very often." I wish you could have heard the prayer of humble thankfulness which went up to heaven from the family altar in that pastor's study that night.—Dr. M. D. Hoge.

528. Only One Doctrine.

An aged Christian minister said: "When I was a young man I knew everything; when I got to be thirty-five years of age, in my ministry I had only a hundred doctrines of religion; when I got to be forty years of age I had only fifty doctrines of religion; when I got to be sixty years of age I had only ten doctrines of religion; and now I am dying at seventy-five years of age, and there is only one thing I know, and that is, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—T. De Witt Talmage.

529. Redemption Ground.

In a little book entitled "Gospel Ethnology," the author shows by a careful comparison of missionary enterprise for the past 170 years, that what has been most effective to pierce through the callousness and prejudices of heathenism has been the story of the Cross, the sufferings of the sinless Saviour proclaimed to men as the means of their pardon and acceptance with God. And what is seen abroad in heathen lands is seen here also at home. When we want to win men, what do we do? We get back to the old story.—J. D. Jones.

530. Perverting the Gospel.

If, at the tent door, the Arab offers to the thirsty passer-by a cup of water, clear, cool, and sparkling in the cup, but in which he has cleverly concealed a painful and deadly poison, he would deserve and receive the anathema of all honest men. Much more terrible shall be the doom of him who, pretending friendship with the souls of men, and offering them in their need, instead of the pure water of life the deadly poison of false doctrine, shall bring down upon himself the righteous and unerring anathema of God.—R. Brewin.

531. Painting the Lily.

In the vicinity of the Duomo, in Florence, are the bronze gates that Michael Angelo said were fit to be the gates of Paradise. Once they were covered with exquisite enamel work. The decorators guilded the bronze with gold leaf. But the veneer was very thin; soon the damp, the cold, the heat, cracked the delicate frosting and now it is all gone. To-day the gates stand forth clothed only in their simple splendor. And yet, behold the rich bronze is more beautiful in its simplicity than with its gilded veneer. The storms were kind to the gates and removed what was meretricious and gaudy and restored them to their native beauty.

So men have painted portraits of Jesus; they have tried to "paint the lily and gild refined gold." But, we go back to the portraits of the Gospels and in their simple portrayals find a beauty that had been lost.—F. S. Wicks.

532. Ministerial Responsibility.

Some may recall a striking incident committed to the New York press a few years ago by a deeply humbled minister. One of the leading members of his church was greatly distressed in his last sickness on reviewing his mode of life, reflecting upon the large amount he had spent upon his family, and the small sum he had given the Lord. The pastor endeavored to comfort him in every way. He spoke of his having given cheerfully and as much as the others. He reminded him that the best of us are unprofitable servants, and must look to the mercy of God in Christ as our only hope. The troubled man found no peace or comfort, but grew more and more uneasy and distressed as his end drew near. At last, taking the hand of his pastor, he said: "Brother, I am going to the Judge, unprepared to meet Him, because you have been unfaithful to me. For years I have lived and taught my family to live largely for this world. We have denied ourselves nothing, but spent thousands on personal comforts and luxuries. When I gave hundreds to Christ and His Church, it should have been thousands. My business energy, time, and money have been mostly devoted to self-pleasing and gratification; and how can I meet my Judge and give an account of my stewardship? I am beyond recovery. Do what you can to save other professors who are in the same current of self-indulgence and extravagance, which is sweeping them to destruction."—Rev. W. W. Landrum.

533. Source of Power.

A man who does not believe the Bible has no Bible grounds to expect power. And this is one reason why the pulpit and pew have lost power. Nothing is fixed.

The other day a man went to President McKinley, wanting a job. He was asked:

"Are you a Republican?"

"No, sir."

"A Democrat?"

"No, sir."

"A Populist?"

"No, sir."

"Well, what are you, then?"

"Well, sir, they say at home that I am a 'straddler.'"

That's it, we've too many straddlers. We want men who believe what they pretend to preach. Not because some little "ology" says so, but because God says it, and that's enough. I say this will give a man power.—L. G. Broughton.

534. Wholly God's.

When General Booth was asked what had been the secret of his success, he replied: "I will tell you the secret—God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities, but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ would do for them, I made up my mind that God should have all of William Booth there was; and if anything has been achieved, it is because God has all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life."—Selected.

535. "We Would See Jesus."

On a lovely Sunday morning in August we arrived at Osborne. We were desirous of seeing Her Majesty, but did not succeed. We only saw her house, her gardens, and her retainers. Then we went to Whippingham Church, having been told that the Queen would attend divine service. But again we were disappointed. We only saw the seat the august lady was wont to occupy. The ladies and gentlemen of the court came to church, and those we saw; we even heard the court-chaplain preach, but of the sovereign we saw nothing. Well, this was a disappointment we could easily get over. But with me it led to a serious frame of thought. I said to myself: "What if the flock committed to your care should come to church to see the King of kings, and yet through some fault of yours not get to see Him! What if you, the great King's dependent, detain men with yourself, by your words and affairs and all sorts of important matters which yet are trifles in comparison with Jesus! May it not be that we ministers often thus disappoint our congregations?—Pastor Funcke.

536. Proper Question.

A member of Ebenezer Erskine's congregation recorded that having gone once to that godly man to express his admiration and gratitude for a particular sermon, Mr. Erskine accepted gratefully the latter but dismissed the former peremptorily, and asked with kindling eye, "Did the sermon lead you to Christ? If never before did you then and there give yourself to Jesus Christ?" The preacher's fidelity was painful at the moment, and was resented; but after reflection led the visitor to acknowledge that, but for the preacher's turning away the conversation from praise of the sermon to Jesus Christ, he would have been little or nothing the better for it. As it was he was sent to Christ. The pointed question set him thinking and praying, and he never rested until he had given himself to the Lord Jesus.—A. B. Grosart, D.D.

537. Word Fitly Spoken.

A certain Baptist merchant of Richmond became seriously embarrassed in his business. The report went out that he had failed, and caused much painful surprise. A few days after the suspension of his business Dr. Jeter, in passing down the aisle of the church one Sunday morning, met him. He grasped him by the hand with unwonted warmth, and said: "How are you, brother? I have heard the fine news about you." Just about that time the sad brother was feeling that all the news concerning him was of the worst sort. With mingled surprise and curiosity he asked the doctor what he had heard. "Why, I heard that you had failed in business, and failed honestly. It is nothing to lose your money if you have been able to retain your integrity." The kind word went far to reconcile the brother to his misfortunes. He did "fail honestly," and not long after started again, and rose to high prosperity. —"Life of Dr. Jeter."

538. Universal Gospel.

The late Duke of Wellington once met a young clergyman, who, being aware of his Grace's former residence in the East, and of his familiarity with the ignorance and obstinacy of the Hindoos in support of their false religion, gravely proposed the following question: "Does not your Grace think it almost useless and absurd to preach the Gospel to the Hindoos?" The Duke immediately rejoined: "Look, sir, to your marching orders, 'Preach the Gospel to every creature.'"—F. F. Trench.

539. Instant in Season.

At the beginning of the present world-war it is said that a clergyman appeared before Bishop William Taylor-Smith, Chaplain General of the British army, and applied for a chaplaincy. Because he was a part of the great Church of which the Bishop was a leader, he felt reasonably sure of an appointment.

It is said that Bishop Taylor-Smith looked intently at him for a moment, then taking his watch from his pocket, said: "I am a dying soldier on the battle-field—I have three minutes to live—what have you to say to me?"

The clergyman was confused and said nothing.

Then the Bishop said: "I have two minutes to live—what can you tell me to help my soul?" and still the waiting clergyman made no response. Then said the Bishop solemnly: "I have only one minute to live."

With that the clergyman reached for his Prayer-Book, but the Bishop is reported to have said: "No, not that at such a time as this," and because the clergyman had nothing to say to the dying soldier upon the battle-field, he did not receive his appointment.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

540. Satan's Commentary.

Said a quaint New England preacher: "Beware of Bible commentators who are unwilling to take God's words just as they stand. The first commentator of that sort was the devil in the Garden of Eden. He proposed only a slight change—just the word "not" to be inserted—"Ye shall not surely die." The amendment was accepted, and the world was lost. Satan is repeating that sort of commentary with every generation of hearers. He insists that God couldn't have meant just what He said. To begin with, Satan induced one foolish woman to accept his exegesis; now he has theological professors who are of his opinion on these points; and there are multitudes of men and women who go on in the ways of sin because they believe Satan's word, and do not believe the Word of God.—J. Parker, D.D.

541. Reproof in Preaching.

One thing I have against the clergy, both of the country and in the town; I think they are not severe enough on their congregations. They do not sufficiently lay upon the souls and consciences of their hearers their moral obligations, and probe their hearts and bring up their whole lives and actions to the bar of conscience. The class of sermons which I think are most needed are of the class which offended Lord Melbourne long ago. Lord Melbourne was seen one day coming from a church in the country in a mighty fume. Finding a friend, he exclaimed: "It's too bad! I have always been a supporter of the Church, and I have always upheld the clergy. But it is really too bad to have to listen to a sermon like that we have had this morning. Why, the preacher actually insisted upon applying religion to a man's private life!" But this is the kind of preaching which I like best, the kind of preaching which men need most; but it is also the kind of which they get the least.—W. E. Gladstone.

542. Preaching to One Person.

One very stormy Sunday Dr. Payson went to church more from habit than because he expected to find anybody there. Just after he had stepped inside the door an old negro came in and asked if Dr. Payson was to preach there that day, explaining that he was a stranger in the town, and had been advised to go to his church. "Upon that," said Dr. Payson, "I made up my mind to preach my sermon if nobody else came." Nobody else did come, so the doctor preached to the choir and the negro. Some months afterward he happened to meet the negro and, stopping him, asked how he enjoyed the sermon that stormy Sunday. "Enjoy dat sermon," replied the old man, "I 'clare, Doctor, I nebber heard a better one. Yo' see I had a seat pretty well up front, an' whenebber you'd say somethin's pretty hard like 'gin de sins of men, I'd jess look all roun' ter see who you's a-hittin', and I wouldn't see nobody on'y jess me. An' I says to m'self, 'he must mean you, Pompey, you's sech a dretful sinner.' Well, Doctor, dat ar sermon set me a-thinkin' what a big sinner I war, an' I went an' jined the Church down home. I'se a deacon now."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

543. Stranger in Church.

Dr. A. J. Gordon, late of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church, Boston, had a dream in his early ministry that was as real to him as the vision of Peter when he saw the sheet let down from heaven. He dreamed that Christ came to his church one Sunday morning; and His presence made Dr. Gordon think of his sermon, the choir, the pew rents, the whole church life in the light of Christ's eyes. That vision changed the whole life of the church. What if Christ should come into our homes? What would He think, and what changes would His presence make?—"How Christ Came to Church."

544. Harpoons.

A sailor had just returned from a whaling voyage, and he was taken by a friend to hear an eloquent preacher. After the sermon he said: "Jack, wasn't that a fine sermon?" "Yes, it was ship-shape," said Jack, "the masts just high enough, the sails and rigging all right, but I did not see any harpoons. When a vessel goes on a whaling voyage the great thing is to get whales, but they do not come because you have a fine ship; you must go after them and harpoon them. The preacher must be the whaler."—W. H. Griffith.

545. Wisdom of the World.

Old John Newton tells us that the learned Dr. Taylor, one of the greatest Hebraists of his day, said: "Mr. Newton, I want to tell you something. I have collated the Hebrew Scriptures fifteen times, and I have never found the doctrine of the Atonement in the Hebrew Scriptures." "Dr. Taylor," said John Newton, "once upon a time I tried to light my candle with the extinguisher on, and I am not at all surprised that you have not found the doctrine of the Atonement in the Hebrew Scriptures; and not until you find yourself to be a filthy, lost sinner, although you are a Hebraist, will you find the doctrine of the Atonement in the Hebrew Scriptures." — Rev. George C. Grubb.

546. Careless Commanders.

During a voyage, sailing in a heavy sea near a reef of rocks, a minister on board the vessel made, in a conversation between the man at the helm and the sailors, an inquiry whether they should be able to clear the rocks without making another tack, when the captain gave orders that they should put off to avoid all risk. The minister observed: "I am rejoiced that we have so careful a commander." The captain replied: "It is necessary I should be very careful, because I have souls on board. I think of my responsibility, and remember that, should anything happen through carelessness, souls are very valuable." The minister, turning to some of his congregation who were on the deck, observed: "The captain has preached me a powerful sermon. I hope I shall never forget, when I am addressing my fellow-creatures on the concerns of eternity, that I have souls on board.—Archbishop A. C. Benson.

547. More Power Needed.

The story is told of a preacher who wanted electric light in his study. There was in the house an electric battery that was used for the ringing of various bells. Knowing very little about electricity, he fancied that if the battery could ring a bell it could make a light, and so he ran wires from the battery into his study. Then he adjusted an electric bulb, turned the key and was disappointed to find that he got no light. He consulted an electrician. He said: "I have a battery in my house that has been ringing all the bells for a long time. I thought that this battery that could so well ring bells could light my study. I tried and it failed. What is the matter?" The electrician looked at him and said: "Do you not know that it takes much more power to make a light than it does to ring a bell?" More power to make a light than to make a noise! More power so to live that your light shall so shine before men that they shall glorify your Father, than to be active in ten thousand organizations and movements.—J. F. Carson.

548. God Help Us All.

Charles Kingsley asked a young preacher who was to occupy his pulpit at Eversley to allow him to read two or three of his sermons in manuscript. When he had finished, he chose one by no means the best written, but containing an honest presentation of Jesus Christ, and said: "Preach that. There is a poor soul who will be in church, whose sins it may touch, and whose sorrows it may heal. God help us all!" The needs of humanity are so acute, and the seriousness of attending to them is so great, and the time for our ministry is so short, that it is not worth while to display our little selves. Let the Christ be magnified. "He must increase, but I must decrease."—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

549. Power Behind the Preacher.

The Rev. F. B. Meyer has a firewood factory in connection with his church, where employment is provided for men and boys. A circular saw is used for cutting through beams of solid timber. Until recently, this saw was worked by a crank, turned by twelve or fifteen men. But it was slow, hard, and expensive work. At last, says Mr. Meyer, we were driven to something more expeditious, and bought a gas-engine. And now, the saw, driven by this engine, does in two or three hours as much work as it did formerly in a day, and at less than a tenth of the cost. It is the same saw; but the difference lies in the power that drives it. It used to be driven by hand-power, now it is driven by an equivalent for steam, and the only thing we need to do is to keep the connecting band tight." "It is not a question," continues Mr. Meyer, "as to our abilities or qualifications, but of the power behind us. If that is nothing more than human, it is not surprising that the results are miserably poor. But if we link ourselves to the eternal power of God, nothing will be impossible to us. 'All things are possible to him that believeth.' "

550. Fearfulness in the Preacher.

We were sitting under the shade of an oak tree comparing notes and conferring one with another as to the best methods of service, especially in reference to effective preaching. "I always write my sermons," said my friend, "and then carefully revise them, so that if anything is written calculated to offend any of my hearers, I may at once erase it." This was said by a young clergyman, who was evidently anxious to make his mark as a preacher. Desirous to know that I heard correctly, I replied: "Do you mean that forcible statements, either from your own writing or from Scripture, concerning sin, and the terrors of the judgment to come, are either toned down or avoided?" "Yes," was the reply, "if I think they will offend any one, I do so." I fear this candid testimony indicates the reason why so many ministers are powerless amongst their fellows. "The fear of man bringeth a snare indeed."—Henry Varley.

551. Fearless Preachers.

Suppose a number of persons were to call on a minister on the Sabbath-day morning, and being admitted into his study, one of them should say to him: "I hope, sir, you do not mean to-day to be severe against avarice, for I love money, and my heart goes after my covetousness." Suppose another should say, "I trust you will not be severe against back-biting, for my tongue walketh with slanderers, and I consider scandal to be the seasoning of all conversation." Suppose another should say, "Do not represent implacability as being inconsistent with Divine goodness, for I never did forgive such an one, and I never will." And so of the rest. What would this minister say to these men? Why, if he were in a proper state of mind he would say, "Oh, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"—Wm. Jay.

552. Sign-Post.

The story is told of a clergyman who was far more at home on the hunting-field than in the pulpit. On the morning of a meet he was much annoyed at having to officiate at a funeral, but this over he mounted his horse and started in pursuit of his friends. On the road he sought information of an old woman with a donkey-cart. "Well," she said, "if you ride to the top of the hill, you will come to a 'meenister,' then if you turn to the right you will be likely to come up with them." Handing her a shilling, he said: "My good woman, why do you call the sign-post a 'meenister'?" "Why, you see, sir, it's like this: we used to call them sign-posts, but since you've been in these parts we call them 'meenisters,' 'cos though they point others the way they never go themselves."—London Titbits.

553. Ministers Must Deal Faithfully.

Ministers should not be merely like dials on watches, or milestones on the road, but like clocks and alarums, to sound the alarm to sinners. Aaron wore bells as well as pomegranates, and the prophets were commanded to lift up their voices like a trumpet. A sleeping sentinel may be the loss of the city. —Bishop Hall.

554. Fruit of Faithful Preaching.

In the church of Somerville, New Jersey, where I was afterwards pastor, John Vredenburgh preached for a great many years. He felt that his ministry was a failure, and others felt so, although he was a faithful minister preaching the Gospel all the time. He died, and died amid some discouragements, and went home to God; for no one ever doubted that John Vredenburgh was a good Christian minister. A little while after his death there came a great awakening in Somerville, and one Sabbath two hundred souls stood up at the Christian altar espousing the cause of Christ, among them my own father and mother. And what was peculiar in regard to nearly all of those two hundred souls was that they dated their religious impressions from the ministry of John Vredenburgh.—Autobiography of T. De Witt Talmage.

555. Effective Preaching.

I recently read a story in some newspaper or other about a minister who preached a very elaborate course of lectures in refutation of some form of infidelity, for the special benefit of a man who attended his place of worship. Soon after, the man came and declared himself a Christian. The minister said to him, "Which of my discourses was it that removed your doubts?" The reply was: "Oh, it was not any of your sermons that influenced me. The thing that set me thinking was that a poor woman came out of the chapel beside me and stumbled on the steps, and I stretched out my hand to help her, and she said, 'Thank you!' Then she looked at me and said, 'Do you love Jesus Christ, my blessed Saviour?' And I did not, and I went home and thought about it; and now I can say I love Jesus."—A. Maclaren, D.D.

556. Trust God and Win Souls.

When we were leaving Liverpool, after my father's death, I went with my mother, as she wished to bid "Good-bye" to Dr. McNeile. As we were leaving my mother mentioned that I was to be ordained before long. "Oh!" he said, "I wish I had known that." Then, coming near to me, he laid his hand upon my shoulder, and he said: "At first you will think that you can do everything, then you will be tempted to think you can do nothing; but don't let yourself be cast down: you will learn that you can do what God has for you to do."—Bishop Boyd Carpenter.

557. Vision of the Evangelist.

A quaint old legend runs thus: Proceeding from a pile of material which had been left as rubbish, after a great building had been erected, a voice was heard shouting, "Glory! Glory!" A passer-by, attracted by the rejoicing, stopped to know the cause; and found that the voice came from a mass of marble half covered with dust and rubbish. He brushed away the dirt and said:

"What are you shouting for? There is surely little glory to you in the rubbish heap."

"No," said the marble, "not much glory now, that is true; but Michael Angelo has just passed by, and I heard him say: 'I see an angel in that stone.' And he has gone away for his mallets and chisels, and he is coming back to carve out the angel."

And the stone went off again in an ecstasy, shouting, "Glory! Glory! Glory!"

Humanity was like that stone in the rubbish heap—broken, unclean, useless; but the great Sculptor saw it, and He wondered that there was no one to help. As Angelo saw the angel in that stone, so God sees the image of His Son in the human wreck. Jesus would not have died for us had it been otherwise. To His eye the flower is in the bud, the fruit in the blossom, the butterfly in the grub, the saint in the sinner, and the hero in the rustic. The grace of God carved a Müller out of the family scapegrace, a Pastor Hsi out of the ruined opium fiend, a John B. Gough out of the bar-room wreck. —C. B. Keenleyside.

558. Faulty but Faithful.

A great minister, who was noted for his Christ-like spirit, as well as for his consecrated ability, dreamed that he had died and stood at the gate of heaven knocking for admission. He gave his name, only to be told that his name did not appear upon the books. At last, after earnest entreaty, he was bidden to enter and was told he would have the privilege of appearing before the judge of all the earth, and if he could stand his test he might abide in heaven forever. Standing before the throne, he gave his name, and the following questions were put to him: "Have you led a righteous life?" And he said: "No." "Have you always been kind and forgiving to those who have been around you?" "Alas, no, I have miserably failed here." "Have you always been honest and just?" And he answered, "I fear not." As question after question was put to him by the judge, his case seemed more and more hopeless. The last question was asked him, and to that, too, he was obliged to give the same negative reply. Just when he seemed to be in despair the brightness about the throne became brighter, and suddenly he heard a voice sweeter than a mother's voice. The speaker said: "My Father, I know this man. It is true that he was weak in many ways, but he stood for me in the world, and I take his place before Thee." Just as the last words of the sentence were spoken, the dream was over, and the man awoke; but he had his lesson, and it is a lesson for us all. We have in ourselves no standing before God. It must be in Christ.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

559. Apparent Failure.

After three years of laborious and effective ministry in Carr's Lane Chapel, R. W. Dale wrote to his senior colleague, John Angell James, a long letter expressive of doubt respecting the propriety of continuing his connection with Birmingham. "For the last year and a half," he said, "I have had a growing conviction which has only left me occasionally to return very soon in greater strength than ever, that I am utterly useless at Carr's Lane, and am standing in the way of someone else who would do the work far better. I can honestly say that I have tried hard, looking to God for help, to preach the very central truths of the Gospel, and so to preach them as to reach the hearts of the ungodly. You know how wretched have been the results."—"Life of Dr. Dale."

MONEY.

560. Living Thief.

Dr. Lorimer once asked a man why he did not join the church. The reply was that the dying thief did not join the church, and he was saved. "Well," said the minister, "if you do not belong to a church, you help to support missions, of course?" "No," said the man. "The dying thief did not help missions, and wasn't he saved?" "Yes," said Dr. Lorimer, "I suppose he was, but you must remember that he was a dying thief, whereas you are a living one."—Christian Herald.

561. One Thing Needful.

An Asiatic traveller tells us that one day as he was crossing a desert, he and his party found the bodies of two men laid upon the sand beside the carcass of a camel. By their side lay a small bag of dried dates, two leathern bottles, quite empty, and, on further examination, he noticed that the stomach of the dead camel had been cut open, as if to get at the water, which, as is well known, that animal can carry on its desert journeys for a considerable time. A further glance at the swollen lips and blackened tongues of the two men made it evident that they had died during the most agonizing pains of thirst. "I was much stirred," says the traveller, "when I found that both men had in the belts around their waists large stores of jewels of different kinds, which they had doubtless been crossing the desert to sell in the markets of Persia. I warrant the poor wretches would have bartered many a jewel for a few delicious draughts of water."—J. Jackson Wray.

562. Miser of Marseilles.

I remember hearing about the "miser of Marseilles." About twenty-three years ago he was a figure on the streets of that town. He lived for nothing but money. He gripped, and he grabbed, and he kept. A miser, a money-grub, and very wealthy he was known to be. He was the object of derision throughout the whole of Marseilles, and the South of France.

When he appeared in the streets the boys hooted at him, when he was mentioned among his business associates they jeered at him, the old skin-flint, the miserable old wretch, heaping up money, storing it up. Ah, he was contented thus to live, and thus to die; and his body was carried to the grave without a single attendant. There was not a soul in Marseilles but gave a kind of sneer, and a kind of curse, as he passed the body of the miser on the way to the grave.

Ah, yes, but when his will was read, what is this that brings mourning and lamentation to the whole city? It is this: "From my infancy, I noticed that the poor of Marseilles had great difficulty in getting water. I noticed that water, the gift of God, was very dear, and very difficult to obtain in this city, pure and sweet: and I vowed before God that I would live but for one purpose, for one end. I would save money, money, money; and now I give it to the city, on one condition, that an aqueduct be made from yonder lake on the hills to Marseilles."

As they drink the sweet, luscious, fresh water of that city, I believe the poor say, "Ah, when he lived, we misunderstood him, but he did it for us." The bubbling fountain in Marseilles was the gift of the man who was misunderstood and jeered at. Do you catch it? Jesus was there on the Cross, and the priests said: "If you be the Son of God, come down from the cross," and they all mocked Him, and jeered at Him: but it is from this despised One, this Christ, that the souls, needy and thirsty and despairing, are drinking to-night the water of life. —John Robertson.

563. Religion and Business.

A poor barefooted brother once presented himself at the gate of a convent, and, finding all the monks at work, gravely shook his head and remarked to the abbot, "'Labour not for the meat which perisheth.' 'Mary hath chosen that good part.'" "Very well," said the abbot, with undisturbed composure, and ordered the devout stranger to a cell, and gave him a book of prayers to occupy his time. The monk retired, and sat hour after hour, until day had passed, wondering that no one offered him the slightest refreshment. Hungry and wearied out, he left his cell and repaired to the abbot. "Father," said he, "do not the brethren eat to-day?" "Oh, yes," returned the other, with a quiet smile playing over his aged face, "they have eaten plentifully." "Then, how is it, Father, that you did not call me to partake with them?" "For the simple reason," said the abbot, "that you are a spiritual man, and have no need of carnal food. For our part, we are obliged to eat, and on that account we work; but you, brother, who have chosen 'the good part,' you sit and read all the day long, and are above the want of 'the meat that perisheth.'" "Pardon me, Father," said the mortified and confounded stranger, "I perceive my mistake."—J. N. Norton, D.D.

564. Danger of Covetousness.

A shepherd boy, of small experience, was one day leading his little flock near the entrance of a mountain cavern. He had been told that precious stones had often been discovered in such places. He was, therefore, tempted to leave his charge, and turn aside to explore the dark recesses of the cavern. He began to crawl in, but as he proceeded his face took on a veil of cobwebs, and his hands mittens of mud. He had not gone far when he saw two gems of a ruby glow lying near each other. He put forth his eager fingers to seize them, when a serpent bit him. In pain and fear he crawled quickly back to the light of day, and ran home to the chief shepherd to obtain some remedy for the bite. The good man, who was also his elder brother, sucked the poison from the wound, and applied to it a healing balm. Never afterwards did that shepherd covet the treasures which may lie concealed behind mountain rocks.—Hervey's Manual of Revivals.

565. Miserly Soul.

At the Centennial Convention of churches of Christ, held in Pittsburgh, U. S. A., 1909, Mr. W. H. Book said: "At one time I was in charge of a mission. The house of worship was about to be sold for debt, when an old brother, sound in the faith, came to our rescue with the promise of a loan at 10 per cent., and a mortgage on the house. This is what should have been placed on his tombstone:

"Here lies old Ten Per Cent.;
The more he got, the less he spent;
The more he got, the more he craved;
If he gets to heaven, we will all be saved."

566. Miser's Soul.

A great living physician told me how once he was attending the death-bed of a rich man who seemed as if he could not die; for, with aimless and nervous restlessness, his hands kept moving and opening and shutting over the counterpane. "What is the matter?" asked the physician. "I know," answered the son for his speechless father. "Every night, before he went to sleep, my father liked to feel and handle some of his bank-notes." The son slipped a ten-pound note into the old man's hand, and feeling, handling, and clutching it, he died. Ah me! that ten-pound note grasped in his trembling hand—how much would it avail him before the awful bar of God? Yet how many men die, and have nothing better to show to God than that!—F. W. Farrar, D.D.

567. Cost of an Estate.

"What is the value of this estate?" said a gentleman to another with whom he was riding, as they passed a fine mansion surrounded by fair and fertile fields. "I don't know what it is valued at; I know what it cost its late possessor." "How much?" "His soul. Early in life, he professed faith in Christ, and obtained a subordinate position in a mercantile establishment. He continued to maintain a reputable religious profession till he became a partner in the firm. Then he gave less attention to religion, and more and more to business; and the care of this world choked the Word. He became exceedingly rich in money, but so poor and miserly in soul that none would have suspected he had ever been religious. At length he purchased this large estate, built a costly mansion, and then sickened and died. Just before he died he remarked: "My prosperity has been my ruin."—Selected.

568. Miserly Christians.

A man was once asked for a donation for some church purpose, but excused himself by saying: "I'm fattening a calf, and when it's fat, I'll give the proceeds." The same excuse was given three times over in response to appeals. One day he was approaching church a little late, and heard the choir singing, "The half has never yet been told," and thought, in the distance, the words were, "The calf has never yet been sold." Conscience stricken, he sold the calf, and gave the proceeds to the church.—C. R. Scoville.

569. Accident Wrongly Described.

I remember that terrible accident which occurred on the Thames—the sinking of the *Princess Alice* steamboat. It appalled everybody, and we called it a "mysterious providence." I remember reading the newspapers that when the collision occurred the boat "cracked and crumbled like a match-box"—that was the sentence used. Why did it do so? Not by a special providence, but because it was built like a match-box—as slim and as flimsy: and the providence that ended so fatally was, as usual, not the providence of God, but the reckless greed of man.—J. Jackson Wray.

570. Cows or Christ.

Two men, a Christian and a sceptic, were discussing the evidences of the Christian religion. The sceptic frankly and bluntly said: "We might as well drop this matter, for I don't believe a word you say; and more than that, you yourself don't believe it. For to my certain knowledge you have not given, the last twenty years, so much for the spread of Christianity, such as the building of churches or for foreign and home missions, as your last Durham cow cost."—Christian Endeavor World.

571. Cheerful Giver.

We are assured in the New Testament that the Lord loves a cheerful giver, and nothing is more discouraging than to see people give grudgingly for noble causes. A story told by the late Eugene Field illustrates the thought. When Lawrence Barrett's daughter was married, Stuart Robson sent to the bridegroom a check for five thousand dollars. Miss Felicia Robson, who attended the wedding, conveyed the gift.

"Felicia," said her father, upon her return, "did you give him the check?"

"Yes, father," answered the dutiful daughter.

"What did he say?" asked Robson.

"He didn't say anything," replied Miss Felicia, "but he shed tears."

"How long did he cry?"

"Why, father, I didn't time him; I should say, however, that he wept fully a minute."

"Fully a minute!" roared Robson. "Why, I cried an hour after I'd signed it!"—L. A. Banks.

572. Giving and Praying.

The venerable Father Sewall, of Maine, once entered a meeting in behalf of foreign missions, just as the collectors of the contributions were resuming their seats. The chairman of the meeting requested him to lead in prayer. The old gentleman stood, hesitatingly, as if he had not heard the request. It was repeated in a louder voice; but there was no response. It was observed, however, that Mr. Sewall was fumbling in his pockets, and presently he produced a piece of money, which he deposited in the contribution-box. The chairman, thinking he had not been understood, said loudly, "I didn't ask you to give, Father Sewall; I asked you to pray." "Oh, yes," he replied, "I heard you, but I can't pray till I have given something."—N. T. Anecdotes.

573. Be Consistent!

A gentleman canvassing for an important benevolent enterprise was about to call upon a certain wealthy professor of religion who was more devout than generous. Ignorant of this fact, he asked his last contributor how much he thought the man would give. "I don't know," was the reply. "If you could hear him pray, you'd think he would give all he is worth." The collector called on the rich man, and to his surprise received a flat refusal. As he was taking his leave, it occurred to him to repeat what he had been told. "I asked a man," said he, "how much you would probably give, and he replied, 'If you could hear that man pray, you'd think he would give all he is worth.'" The rich man's head dropped, and his eyes filled with tears. He took out his pocket-book and handed his visitor a liberal contribution.—Rev. Harry Rogers, D.D.

574. Giving to God.

Dr. Adam Clarke once preached on the words, 'Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." At the conclusion of the discourse he announced a collection. "How can you, Doctor," asked a lady afterwards, "reconcile the freeness of the water of life with the collection at the close?" "Oh, madame," answered the learned and venerable divine, "God gives the water without money and without price; but you must pay for the waterworks, for the pipes, and the pitchers which convey the water to your neighborhood." Remember, you pay nothing to God; you are charged nothing for the water; but you cannot have convenient chapels to sit in without paying for them, nor a regular ministry to urge the water on your acceptance, without making a suitable provision for its support.—J. C. Jones, D.D.

575. Limitation of Money.

If you had all the gold in the world, you could not go to the cemetery and bring back the loved one with the bloom of life upon her cheek, and have her sit in the family circle and charm you with her merriment and laughter. A steamer returned from her trip to Alaska and cast anchor in the harbor of Seattle. Among its passengers were a man and his wife who were returning from their search for gold in the Klondike. Friends met them on the wharf to congratulate them, saying, "Tell us of your success." The man replied, "My wife and I left here six months ago with scarcely anything, and now we have three hundred and fifty thousand dollars in gold dust in the hold of the ship. But," he continued, "we left our precious baby buried on the banks of the Yukon, beneath the snow and ice, and we would gladly part with all the gold if we only had our boy." All the gold of Klondike would not melt the snow on that grave and bring the child back to life. Remember, it is written, "They that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother nor give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of their souls is precious."—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

576. Insane Builder for Time.

"Use the world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away." It is as if you were in the compartment of a railway train going from St. Enoch's to St. Pancras, or from the Central to Euston; you are not much put about if you are not very comfortable on the journey. You do not feel like losing heart because of the few hours' discomfort. You go though you are crowded, though you have not got your house on your back, nor your home comforts about you.

You say, "It will soon be over." Past the stations you rush, and as you shake yourself on the platform of the London Terminus you say, "I have used the railway train as not abusing it, for behold, the journey is past."

When you hear of a man working for this world too much, richly upholstering it, building as if he were to be here for eternity, you are inclined to think that the man is insane. What would you think, if at the Central there, a man came into the compartment with a four-post bed and an armchair; and he has his slippers, and his cupboard full of eatables and drinkables? He has ordered a lovely suite of furniture; and as he brings these things to the train, the porters say, "What are these?"

"Why, I wish to have all my house about me."

"But you will fill the train. You have only got a small portion in the train that is going to London: what are you doing bringing the whole furniture of the house with you? You cannot have it."

Ay, and the devil snickers at many a Glasgow fool who is upholstering the little bit of the railway compartment that he is to occupy for a few hours, for a few ticks of the clock, as if he were to be there forever. Miserable fool, wretched, insane builder for time, thinking that you are to be there for eternity!

Do you catch it? You money-grub, you hard-fisted wordling, you that sweat and toil, and are damned for your gold, what a fool you are! But a few short days, and the journey is over. You are abusing the world, if you make it your God, and end, and aim, instead of your little help, and put-upness on the journey to the eternal home.—John Robertson.

577. Wealth Too Dearly Bought.

A ship bearing a hundred emigrants has been driven from her course and wrecked on a desert island far from the tracks of man. There is no way of escape; but there are means of subsistence. An ocean, unvisited by ordinary voyagers, circles round their prison; but they have seed, with a rich soil to receive, and a genial climate to ripen it. Ere any plan has been laid or any operations begun, an exploring-party returns to headquarters, reporting the discovery of a gold mine. Thither instantly the whole party resort to dig. They labour successfully day by day and month after month. They acquire and accumulate large heaps of gold. But spring is past, and not a field has been cleared nor a grain of seed committed to the ground. The summer comes, and their wealth increases; but the store of food is small. In harvest they begin to discover that their heaps of gold are worthless. When famine stares them in their faces a suspicion shoots across their fainting hearts that the gold has cheated them. They rush to the woods, fell the trees, dig the roots, till the ground, sow the seed. It is too late! Winter has come, and their seed rots in the ground. They die of want in the midst of their treasures. This earth is the little isle, eternity the ocean around it; on this shore we have been cast. There is a living seed, but gold mines attract us. We spend spring and summer there; winter overtakes us toiling there, destitute of the bread of life, forgetting that we ought to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto us."—W. Arnot, D.D.

578. Deceptive Character of This World's Goods.

Many years ago, when the Egyptian troops conquered Nubia, a regiment was destroyed by thirst in crossing this desert. The men, being upon a limited supply of water, suffered from extreme thirst, and, deceived by the appearance of a mirage that exactly resembled a beautiful lake, they insisted on being taken to its banks by the Arab guide. It was in vain that the guide assured them that the lake was unreal, and he refused to lose the precious time by wandering from his course. Words led to blows, and he was killed by the soldiers whose lives depended on his guidance. The whole regiment turned from the track and rushed towards the welcome waters. Thirsty and faint, over the burning sands they hurried; heavier and heavier their footsteps became, hotter and hotter their breath, as deeper they pushed into the desert, farther and farther from the lost track where the pilot lay in his blood; and still the mocking spirits of the desert, the afreets of the mirage, led them on, and the lake, glistening in the sunshine, tempted them to bathe in its cool waters, close to their eyes, but never at their lips. At length the delusion vanished; the fatal lake had turned to burning sand. Raging thirst and horrible despair! the pathless desert and the murdered guide! Lost! Lost! All lost! Not a man ever left the desert, but they were subsequently discovered, parched and withered corpses, by the Arabs sent in search.—Sir S. Baker.

579. Worldly Honors.

Heliogabalus, the Roman emperor, being jealous of the power of the senate, invited the senators to a great feast. When they were overcome with wine, Heliogabalus left the hall. The doors were fastened without; yet the carousal continued. The emperor shouted to them from a glass door in the ceiling that, as they were ever aspiring after fresh laurels, they should now be satisfied. Wreaths and flowers began to rain upon them. The senators cried, "Enough, enough!" but the rain continued. Terror seized them. They flew to the doors; but they were immovable. Escape was impossible. The relentless storm continued till all were buried and suffocated beneath the murderous sea of flowers.—E. Foster.

580. Worldly Things Unsatisfying.

I have read a story of a man whom Chrysostom did feign to be in prison. "Oh," saith he, "if I had but liberty, I would desire no more!" He had it; and then cried, "If I had enough for necessity, I would desire no more." He had it; and then cried, "Had I a little for variety, I would desire no more." He had it; and then cried, "Had I any office, were it the meanest, I would desire no more." He had it; and cried again, "Had I but a magistracy, though over one town only, I would desire no more." He had it; and then sighed, "Were I but a prince, I would desire no more." He had it; and then sighed, "Were I but a king, I would desire no more." He had it; and then cried, "Were I but an emperor, I would desire no more." He had it; and then exclaimed, "Were I but emperor of the whole world, I would then desire no more." He had it; and then he sat down with Alexander, and wept that there were no more worlds for him to possess. Now, did any man come to enjoy what he is said to desire, it would be but a very mean portion compared with God.—Thomas Brooks.

581. Giving Our Best.

An artist once painted a picture. Other artists had colors richer and rarer and painted more notable pictures. He painted his with one special color in prominence; there was a wonderful red glow on it, and the picture made him famous. Other artists came to study his work, and they said, "What in the world makes his picture great?" They asked the painter, but he only smiled and said, "I cannot tell you," and he worked on with his head bent low. And one went to the Far East and brought costly pigments, and made rich colors, and with these painted, but after a time the picture faded. And they searched, and searched, but could not discover the secret of the old artist's painting. They said, "It is in the way he uses his brushes," and they studied the way he used his brushes, but they could not imitate his work. The old artist painted on and on, and his work got more beautiful, but the artist grew whiter and whiter. At last one day they found him dead before his picture, and they said, "Now we will discover his secret," and they searched his studio, but could not find it. But when they dressed him for the grave they found it—over his heart was a wound that must have been there all of his life. But Death, which seals all things, had closed the wound. The artist had painted with his heart's blood. That was his secret. The very best you have you owe Him.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

582. Strangers on Earth.

"The virtues were invited once
To banquet with the Lord of All;
They came—the great ones rather grim,
And not so pleasant as the small.

They talked and chatted o'er the meal,
They even laughed with temprate glee;
And each one knew the other well,
And all were good as good could be.

Benevolence and Gratitude
Alone of all seemed strangers yet;
They stared when they were introduced—
On earth they never once had met."

NEGLECT.

583. Neglect Is Ruinous.

Neglect is enough to ruin a man. A man who is in business need not commit forgery or robbery to ruin himself; he has only to neglect his business, and his ruin is certain. A man who is lying on a bed of sickness need not cut his throat to destroy himself; he has only to neglect the means of restoration, and he will be ruined. A man floating in a skiff above Niagara need not move an oar or make an effort to destroy himself; he has only to neglect using the oar at the proper time, and he will certainly be carried over the cataract. Most of the calamities of life are caused by simple neglect. Let no one infer, therefore, that because he is not a drunkard, or an adulterer, or a murderer, that therefore he will be saved. Such an inference would be irrational as it would be for a man to infer that, because he is not a murderer, his farm will produce a harvest; or that, because he is not an adulterer, therefore his merchandise will take care of itself.—Albert Barnes.

584. Waving the Lantern.

One night a man in a trap was run down at a level crossing. Consequently the old signalman in charge had to appear in court. After a severe cross-examination he was still unshaken. He said he had waved his lantern frantically, but all to no avail. The following day the superintendent of the line called him into his office. "You did wonderfully well yesterday, Tom," he said. "I was afraid at first that you might waver." "No, sir," replied Tom, "but I was afraid that old lawyer was going to ask me whether my lantern was lit!" How tragic it is that so many Christians are "waving the lantern" in the same way—and lives are lost.—The Sunday Companion.

585. Leaping in the Dark.

One of the old Confederate soldiers told me of a young lad who went out from his community to the war of the 60's. The lad was barely grown. He would go to war, and his mother pressed into his hands a copy of the New Testament as on his forehead she pressed her lips, and tears and prayers were mingled as she bade him good-bye, urging him, as he went to war, to read that little book every day and follow its precepts, and whether he should come back or fall on the field of battle, if he would follow the light of that little book, all would be well. And the old soldier told how the lad went into the war, and went into battle after battle, never reading the little book at all. They were getting ready to go into one of the most awful battles of that fearful struggle, and the commanding officer was advising his men how to behave, and was saying: "You will play the men now. Many of you will not come back, but you will stand with your faces to duty." And this young fellow was seen with face pale like death, while some of the older men twitted him about his being afraid. They said: "They will about get you this time, lad, and you are afraid to die, are you? You are chicken-hearted, are you? You are afraid now, are you?" And drawing the little Testament from his inner pocket, where he had carried it, he said: "When I went away from home, mother urged me to read this, and I meant to do it, and promised her I would, but I have never opened it. She said if I would follow its light and counsel all would be well, but I do not know what its light and counsel are, for I have not read it. Now I am going into this battle with the awful apprehension that I may not come back again. No, men, I am not especially afraid to die," but then he added, with an awful ejaculation, "My God, I am afraid of what is coming after death, for I have made no preparation for it!" Well might he fear. Well might he start back. There can be no sanity at all, there can be no reasonableness at all, in our coming to the end of the earthly life and taking a leap in the dark, all neglectful and unready and unprepared.—George W. Truett, D.D.

586. Oblivion and Neglect.

It is a memorable example, amongst many others that we have, of William the Conqueror's successor, who, being unhappily killed, as he was hunting in the New Forest, all his nobles and courtiers forsook him, only some few that remained laid his body in a collier's cart, which, being drawn with one silly, lean beast through a very foul and filthy way, the cart broke, and there lay the spectacle of worldly glory, both pitifully gored and all bemired. Now, if this were the portion of so mighty a prince, whom immediately before so glorious a troop attended, what, then, must others of meaner rank expect and look for, but only with death's closing up of their eyes to have all their friends excluded, and no sooner gone but to be as suddenly forgotten. Hence it is that oblivion and neglect are the two handmaids of earthly glory.—J. Spencer.

587. Peril of Sleep.

A short time ago a locomotive engine was speeding along the North-West line, whilst the two men who were in it lay fast asleep. A sharp-eyed signalman, from his lookout, was alert enough to see how matters stood, and without a moment's delay telegraphed in advance to lay a fog-signal on the line, that the detonation might rouse the sleepers. Happily, it was done in time, and, startled from what might have been a fatal slumber, the men shut off steam, reversed the engine, and averted a terrible calamity. It is no breach of charity to suspect that some of you are hastening on to destruction, but know it not, for your consciences are asleep; and I would lay a fog-signal on the line that, ere you pass another mile, the crashing sound may rouse you to your danger, as you hear the voice of eternal truth declaring, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die!"—J. Thain Davidson.

588. Rebuking an Emperor.

Emperor Theodosius denied the deity of Christ. When his son Arcadius was about sixteen he decided to make him a partner with himself in the government of the empire. Among the great men who assembled themselves to congratulate the new wearer of the imperial purple was a Bishop named Amphilocus. He made a handsome address to the Emperor and was about to leave when Theodosius exclaimed, "What, do you take no notice of my son?" Then the Bishop went up to Arcadius and, putting his hands upon his head, said: "The Lord bless thee, my son!" The Emperor, roused to fury by this slight, exclaimed, "What, is this all the respect you pay to a prince that I have made of equal dignity with myself?" Amphilocus replied, "Sire, you do so highly resent my apparent neglect of your son, because I do not give him equal honors with yourself. Then what must the eternal God think of you when you degrade his co-equal and co-eternal Son to the level of one of his creatures?" The Emperor judged the reproof to be just.—The Wonderful Word.

589. Warnings Unheeded.

The steamer *Portland* left Boston harbor in the storm of November, 1898. She left when all the signals for danger were flying; she left when the government agent at the signal office had advised outgoing vessels to remain in port; she left when the owners of the vessel had commanded her to stay at dock. Why she left no one has ever been able to say. Her captain must have been apprehensive, for he said to the lighthouse-keeper, "Keep your light burning bright to-night, for we may come back."

But she never came back. Outside the harbor the mighty storm caught the vessel in her embrace and tore her to pieces, and not one on board ever again saw home or friends.

A quill was picked up from the coast which may have been from some of her passengers. The little piece of paper read: "We are on a raft; we have given up all hope; we are going down. O God, if I could only see my wife and little boy again!"

It is the saddest story of a wreck written for many a day. And the saddest part of it is that the vessel was wrecked because the captain disobeyed the orders of his superior.

How many lives have been shipwrecked for the same reason! God has a plan for every life, and His orders must be obeyed. He knows the best for us all. On the highway of the seas there are drifting about more than fifty ships known as derelicts. They have been abandoned by owners and crews, and now, with no compass by means of which they may be guided, with no pilot at the wheel to carry them into the harbor, with no captain to issue orders, and with no crew to obey them, they drift about, only a menace to other vessels that sail the seas. God forbid that any of us should become derelicts or wrecks because we have disobeyed our great Commander. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."—J. Wilbur Chapman.

590. Indifference.

Doctor Torrey used to have an illustration that was repeated to me of an old father and mother who determined to give their boy an education. They were as poor as they could be. They had a conference in their home and decided to send their boy to the university. They knew he must be away three years in his preparatory work and four years in his college work. Seven years in all. In the summer vacation he must work near the school, but could not come home. Every dollar sent to him increased the pinch of poverty at home. Finally the old father said, "Wife, I cannot stand it; I am going to see him." He did not have money enough to go by train, so he drove across the hills. It took him days and days, and the horse he drove was ridiculous. The wagon in which he drove provoked a smile from all who saw him come into the university yard. He never knew that his boy had drifted, he had not been told that he had forgotten his father's God. Three young fellows came swinging down the sidewalk in the university town. When they saw the old man they laughed at him. He saw them in the distance, too, and his old heart began to beat rapidly; he recognized one of them as his boy. He threw down his lines, sprang out of his wagon and ran to meet his boy. They told me in the south that that boy looked at him for only a moment, then in the presence of his friends who had jeered at this old man, told him he did not know him. He said, "You are not my father." The old man turned without a word; he did not touch his boy, he did not kiss him. He got into his wagon, rode away back over the hills, went into the old farmhouse, sat down in the old chair; his head dropped forward on his breast, and he was dead.

I wondered when I heard the story why the boy did not have a vision of the old days when his father said he would educate him; I wondered why the recollection of his father's prayers did not stir him. But I can explain that better than that you should be indifferent to Christ.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

591. Criminal Negligence.

In the Isle of Man, as I was one day walking on the seashore, I remember contemplating, with thrilling interest, an old grey ruined tower covered with ivy. There was a remarkable history connected with the spot. In that tower was formerly hanged one of the best governors the island ever possessed. He had been accused of treachery to the king during the time of the Civil Wars, and received sentence of death. Intercession was made on his behalf, and a pardon was sent; but that pardon fell into the hands of his bitter enemy, who kept it locked up, and the governor was hanged. His name is still honored by the Manx; and you may often hear a pathetic ballad sung to his memory to the music of the spinning-wheel. We must all feel horror-struck at the fearful turpitude of that man who, having the pardon of his fellow-creature in his possession, could keep it back and let him die the death of a traitor. But let us restrain our indignation till we ask ourselves whether God might not point His finger to most of us and say: "Thou art the man! Thou hast a pardon in thine hands to save thy fellow-creatures, not from temporal, but from eternal death. Thou hast a pardon suited to all—sent to all—designed for all; thou hast enjoyed it thyself, but hast thou not kept it back from thy brother, instead of sending it to the ends of the earth?"—Hugh Stowell.

NEUTRALITY.

592. Hopeless Task.

Canon Newbolt, of St. Paul's, London, says: "Of all hopeless things, the attempt to be neutral is the most hopeless. The great Italian poet, that disdainful soul, brings to bear all his power of contempt on those whom he describes as despised both of heaven and hell—men who strove to be neutral, who lived without infamy and without praise, mingled with those neutral angels who were neither for God nor for His enemies, but were, as he said, for themselves." The world is always demanding of the Christian either alliance or open war. Men may attempt to mark off neutral territory between Christ and the world, but there is, in fact, none.—Ford C. Ottman.

593. Name to Live, but Dead.

Some years ago I found myself, fresh from a rural district, in a great city. It was Sunday. Naturally I felt lonesome when I looked upon so many strange sights. I went to church.

It was one of these "First" churches, like Sardis, that had "a name to live, but was dead." Such formality! The choir and organ were in the top of the house. All the singers looked like wax figures. The organist fumbled over the keys as if he were run by machinery. The singing! Well, I never heard any. They said it was fine; but if they ever said a word, I never caught it. The preacher was a good man, but of the same type—cold, stiff and waxy. Very few were present—two thousand enrolled members, and not five hundred there.

When all was over I went to my hotel. Not a soul spoke to me or cared one snap for me. I made up my mind that if that was the only church in the city I was done going to church. But, thank God, there was another church! That night I went to it. The house was full—it held five thousand people.

A large choir sat close to the preacher. They sang bright, catchy songs, and everybody took part. Then the preacher stepped forward and gave us a "straight from the shoulder" sermon on "How a Christian Should Vote." It just thrilled me! Everybody was so happy. They shook hands, and chatted, and made me feel at home.

I shall always praise God for that service. I believe it saved me from ruin. What difference does it make if we do smash a form if we can convince a poor, homeless boy that we care for him? Sing the Doxology before, behind or not at all. Give us something that will help to draw and hold the unsaved, even if it is a tambourine and a bagpipe.—L. G. Broughton.

594. Doing No Harm.

The story has been told of a soldier who was missed amid the bustle of a battle, and no one knew what had become of him, but it was known that he was not in the ranks. As soon as opportunity offered, his officer went in search of him and, to his surprise, found that the man, during a battle, had been amusing himself in a flower garden. When it was demanded what he did there, he excused himself by saying, "Sir, I am doing no harm." But he was tried, convicted and shot. What a sad but true picture this is of many who waste their time and neglect their duty, and who can give no better answer than, "Lord, I am doing no harm!" —Selected.

595. On the Fence.

In the early days of Rome the philosopher Carneades endeavored to inculcate the spirit of universal skepticism in the city. He offered to argue alternately both for and against any proposition that was given him. He declared that the mind only attained its true greatness when it was in a state of complete suspense. To settle anything was a sign of ignorance. Then Cato came forward. He arose in the senate and urged his comrades to expel the man from the city. He said he was a trifler. He declared that the habit of arguing on both sides of everything would introduce hopeless moral corruption into the life of Rome. Was he right? Let the reader of history answer. Cato was a man of the old Roman type. He lived before the days when the Roman general prayed to the gods of every city he entered and when a Roman emperor venerated in his private chapel statues of Abraham, Orpheus, Christ and the impostor Apollonius of Tyana.—Rev. George H. Ferris.

596. No Neutral Ground.

Brother, let me say this to you: you are on one side or the other. I recollect once at a county campmeeting a gentleman approached me and said: "I'm mighty glad to see this grand work going on here. I hope this whole community will be saved." "Well," I said, "thank you, brother. What church do you belong to?" He said, "I don't belong to the church, but I'm a Christian." I said: "You a Christian, and not belong to any church! Why, you are the man I've been looking for, too, these many years. I've offered a reward—a large reward—for one of your sort. Christians are sort of scarce in the church, and the Lord knows I didn't know there was one out of the church. I've found an anomaly in the moral universe of God—a Christian out of the Church!" And

I said to him: "I am mighty glad to meet you, sir. Now, this afternoon, when I call up the penitents, I want to call on you to pray for them." "Oh, no," he says, "I can't pray in public." "Why?" 'Because I am not a member of the church." "Well," said I, "when the service is over this afternoon, take one of the boys—one of the penitents—out from the altar and go out into the woods and pray with him." 'Oh, no, I can't do that." "Why?" "Because I'm not a member of the church, Mr. Jones." "Well," said I, "can't you just take one of the boys by the arm and carry him off in the woods and talk with him about Christ?" "No," he said, "my trouble is I'm not a member of the church." "No, sir," said I, "that ain't your trouble. Your trouble is you belong to the devil from your hat to your heels! That's your trouble." "He that is not with Me, is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad."—Sam Jones.

PARDON.

597. Luther's Vision.

It is said that Luther during a serious illness seemed to see Satan coming to him with a great scroll, on which were written all the sins and errors of his life. Looking at him wth a triumphant smile, he unrolled it before the saint: "These are your sins. There is no hope of your going to heaven." Luther read the long list, with growing consternation, when suddenly it flashed upon his mind that there was one thing not written there. He said aloud, "One thing you have forgotten. The rest is all true, but one thing you have forgotten. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sins."—H. F. Sayles.

598. Like His Savior.

I was a small boy in Atlanta when Alexander H. Stephens died. Stephens, as many of you recall, was Vice-President of the Confederacy. He opposed secession and fought with all his power against it. His oration before the Georgia Secession Convention will last as long as history. Stephens was a cripple and died shortly after becoming Governor of Georgia. When it became known that he was soon to die, that the physicians had no hope of prolonging his days, the great men of state crowded his bedroom and besought him to sign important documents. But Stephens waved them away and called for his private secretary and told him to bring out of his private desk an old, faded paper. The secretary found it; it was the petition of an humble woman back in the hills seeking the pardon of her sinful son in the penitentiary. With the great State officials begging Stephens to lay it aside and take up weightier matters, he replied: "No, I am going to sign this. The great matters will take care of themselves." And, being propped on his pillow, Governor Stephens took the yellow, faded appeal of the heart-broken mother who had no other intercessor at the Governor's mansion, and he dipped the pen in the ink, and across the yellow appeal he wrote "PARDONED," and underneath he scrawled his name, "Alexander H. Stephens, Governor"—and dropped back upon his pillow dead.

On the high hill of Calvary the Son of God was dying. All the sins of the world were upon Him. At His side a thief and a murderer, an outcast, hung suspended between time and eternity. He was unfitted to go into eternity, and he was being forced out of the era of time. He cried out: "Jesus, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!" And from the bruised lips of the Christ came the answer that has echoed down the corridors of the ages: "Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise!"—Arthur T. Abernethy.

599. Free Pardon.

When I was preaching in Yorkshire at some mission services, a collier came to me at the close of one of the services and said to me, "I would like to be a Christian, but I cannot receive what you have said to-night." I said, "My brother, why not?" He said, "I would give anything to believe that God would forgive my sin; but I cannot believe He will just forgive it if I turn to Him. It is too cheap." I looked at him, and I said, "My dear friend, have you been at work to-day?" "Yes." "Where have you been working?" He looked at me slightly astonished and said, "I was down in the pit, as usual." "How did you get home?" "Oh, I walked home along the road." "But how did you get out of the pit?" "The way I always do. I got into the cage and I was pulled up to the top." "How much did you pay to come out of the pit?" He looked at me astonished and said, "Pay? Of course, I don't pay anything." I said to him, "Were you not afraid to trust yourself in that cage? Was it not too cheap?" "Oh, no," he said. "It was cheap for me, but it cost the company a lot of money to sink that shaft." And without another word the truth of that admission broke upon him, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and he saw if he could have salvation without money and without price, it had cost the Infinite God a great price to sink that shaft and rescue lost men.—G. Campbell Morgan.

600. Reuben Johnson's Pardon.

When I was in Ohio a few years ago I was invited to preach in the State prison. Eleven hundred convicts were brought into the chapel, and all sat in front of me. After I got through the preaching, the chaplain said to me:

"Mr. Moody, I want to tell you of a scene which occurred in this room. A few years ago our commissioners went to the Governor of the State and got him to promise that he would pardon five men for good behavior. The Governor consented, with this understanding—that the record was to be kept secret, and that at the end of six months the five men highest on the roll should receive a pardon, regardless of who or what they were. At the end of six months the prisoners were all brought into the chapel. The commissioners came; the president stood on the platform and, putting his hand in his pocket, brought out some papers and said:

"I hold in my hands pardons for five men."

The chaplain told me he never witnessed anything on earth like it. Every man was still as death. Many were deadly pale. The suspense was awful; it seemed as if every heart had ceased to beat. The commissioner went on to tell them how they had got the pardon; but the chaplain interrupted him.

"Before you make that speech, read out the names. This suspense is awful."

So he read out the first name. "Reuben Johnson will come and get his pardon;" and he held it out, but none came forward.

He said to the warden, "Are all the prisoners here?"

The warden told him they were all there.

Then he said again, "Reuben Johnson will come and get his pardon. It is signed and sealed by the Governor. He is a free man."

Not one moved. The chaplain looked right down where Reuben was. He was well known; he had been nineteen years there, and many were looking around to see the fortunate man who had got his pardon. Finally the chaplain had caught his eye and said:

"Reuben, you are the man."

Reuben turned around and looked behind him to see where Reuben was. The chaplain said the second time, "Reuben, you are the man," and the second time he looked around, thinking it must be some other Reuben. He had to say three times, "Reuben, come and get your pardon."

At last the truth began to steal over the old man. He got up, came along down the hall, trembling from head to foot, and when he got the pardon he looked at it and went back to his seat, buried his face in his hands and wept. When the prisoners got into the ranks to go back to the cells Reuben got into the ranks, too, and the chaplain had to call him:

"Reuben, get out of the ranks; you are a free man; you are no longer a prisoner."

And Reuben stepped out of the ranks. He was free!

That is the way men make out pardons; they make them out for good character or good behavior; but God makes out pardons for men who have not got any characters. He offers a pardon to every sinner on earth if he will take it. I do not care who he is or what he is like. He may be the greatest libertine that ever walked the streets, or the greatest blackguard who ever lived, or the greatest drunkard, or thief, or vagabond. Christ commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel to every creature.—D. L. Moody.

601. Value of Pardon.

A man named John Welsh lay in prison in Chicago under sentence of death. His friends tried to get his sentence commuted to imprisonment for life. The day before that fixed for his execution arrived without any favourable reply being received. The prisoner sat in his cell listening and longing earnestly for a respite. Presently he heard the rumbling of a car. It brought the materials for the scaffold, and soon he heard the stroke of the hammers and pictured himself hanging on the scaffold he could hear them raising. The sound almost drove him frantic, and he begged that he might be taken anywhere away from the dreadful noise. He was taken to a distant cell, and there he sat on the edge of his bed, haunted with gloomy thoughts, all hope gone. He was startled from his revery by a hurried step along the corridor. The key was thrust into the lock, and one of the officers of the prison stood before him. He held in his hand a paper signed by the Governor of the State of Illinois. It was a commutation of his sentence. How the truth burst upon his mind! When the paper was handed to him he could not read it for tears, but it was a paper bringing him his life, and he hugged it and kissed it.—H. W. Taylor.

602. Gone and Forgotten.

There is a charming old Celtic legend which says that the Angel of Mercy was sent to a certain saint to tell him that he must start for the Celestial City. The saint received the messenger and his message with gladness, and at the appointed hour they set off together. As they passed up the shining way beyond the bounds of this world the saint was suddenly troubled with the thought of his sins. "Mercy," he said, addressing his angelic guide, "where did you bury my sins?" "I only remember that I buried them," he replied, "but I cannot tell where." Then he added, "As for the Father, he has forgotten that you ever sinned." What a wonder is divine forgiveness! How absolutely complete!—Sunday School Chronicle.

603. Forgiveness Delayed.

We had in Philadelphia a young man belonging to one of the better families, so-called, who by his wayward actions disgraced his father and finally broke his heart. After a little he left his home, went to Baltimore, from there to Washington, and after months of wandering determined to return. He was ashamed to meet the members of his family, but he knew that if he made a peculiar sound at the door at the midnight hour, there was one who would hear and understand; and when he stood before the door it was swung open and without a word of reproach his mother bade him welcome. The next morning he did not come down from his room, the second morning he was ashamed to come, but the third morning, as he descended the stairway, his brother, a physician, met him and said, "Edward, mother is dying." She had been suddenly stricken down and was anxious to see him. He made his way into her room, knelt beside her bed and sobbed out, "Oh, mother, I beseech you to forgive me!" and with her last departing strength she drew close to his ear and said, "My dear boy, I would have forgiven you long ago if you had only accepted it." This is a picture of God. With a love that is infinite, and a pity beyond description, He waits to save every one who will but simply receive His gift of life.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

604. Judge Pays a Prisoner's Fine.

Mr. Frank Weaver, at one of the tent meetings, told the following story: Two men who had been friends and companions in their youth met in the police court, the one on the magistrate's bench, the other in the prisoner's dock. The case was tried and the prisoner was found guilty. Would the judge, in consideration of their friendship years before, forbear to pass judgment? No, he must fulfill his duty, justice must be done, the law of the land obeyed. He gave out the sentence—fourteen days' hard labour or a fine of 10 pounds. The condemned man had nothing to pay, so the prison cell was before him. But as soon as he had pronounced the sentence the judge rose from the bench, threw aside his magistrate's robes, and, stepping down to the dock, stood beside the prisoner, paid his fine for him, and then said, "Now, John, you are coming home with me to supper." It is just so with the sinner. God cannot overlook sin. Justice must be done and sentence pronounced, but Christ Himself pays the debt and the sinner is free—H. F. Sayles.

605. Retaliation Repudiated.

An incident well worth relating is told of General Robert E. Lee, the Confederate officer during the American Civil War. Jefferson Davis once asked him what he thought of a certain officer in the army, as he had an important place he wanted filled by a trustworthy man. Lee gave the officer an excellent recommendation, and he was immediately promoted to the position. Some of Lee's friends told him that the officer had said some very bitter things against him, and were surprised at the General's recommendation. "I was not asked," said Lee, "for the officer's opinion of me, but my opinion of him." Only a noble heart could prompt such action. In praying we are told to love our enemies, but in our every-day life we too often love only those who love us.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

606. Sir Eardley Wilmot's Advice.

A gentleman who had filled many high stations in public life, with the greatest honour to himself and advantage to the nation, once went to Sir Eardley Wilmot in great anger at a real injury he had received from a person high in the political world, which he was considering how to resent in the most effectual manner. After relating the particulars to Sir Eardley, he asked if he did not think it would be manly to resent it. "Yes," said Sir Eardley, "it would doubtless be manly to resent it, but it would be Godlike to forget it." This the gentleman declared had such an instantaneous effect upon him that he came away quite another man, and in temper entirely altered from that in which he went.—Sunday School Times.

607. Power in the Blood.

Mr. Innis, a great Scotch minister, once visited an infidel who was dying. When he came for the first time he said, "Mr. Innis, I am relying on the mercy of God; God is merciful, and He will never damn a man forever." When he got worse and was nearer death Mr. Innis went to him again, and he said, "O Mr. Innis, my hope is gone; for I have been thinking, if God be merciful, God is just, too; and what if, instead of being merciful to me, He should be just to me? What would then become of me? I must give up my hope in the mere mercy of God; tell me how to be saved!" Mr. Innis told him that Christ had died in the stead of all believers—that God could be just, and yet the justifier through the death of Christ. "Ah!" said he, "Mr. Innis, there is something solid in that; I can rest on that; I can not rest on anything else;" and it is a remarkable fact that none of us ever met with a man who thought he had his sins forgiven unless it was through the blood of Christ. Meet a Mussulman; he never had his sins forgiven; he does not say so. Meet an infidel; he never knows that his sins are forgiven. Meet a legalist; he says, "I hope they will be forgiven"; but he does not pretend they are. No one ever gets even a fancied hope apart from this, that Christ, and Christ alone, must save by the shedding of His blood.—C. H. Spurgeon.

608. God's Readiness to Forgive.

Macaulay speaks of James II. as being hard and as glorying in the opportunity of crushing another. One of the most affecting pictures in the Royal Academy of this year depicts the king in the act of crushing the poor defeated Duke of Monmouth. In a room hung with tapestry the king stands erect, lank, sickly and contemptuous. The poor duke, whose rebellion had roused the hatred of the King, thought to move him to pity. His arms were "bound behind him with a silken cord, and, thus secured, he was ushered into the presence of the implacable kinsman whom he had wronged. Then Monmouth threw himself on the ground and crawled to the king's feet." The artist represents him with face on the smooth floor, eyes swollen with weeping and watching, striving to move the king to pity. It was in vain. The king only crushed him with hardness and contempt. No wonder that the historian says strongly, "To see him, and not to spare him, was an outrage on humanity and decency." How many such outrages are committed in a day by those of lower rank! Those who feel that they have sinned and who come imploringly to the feet of Divine mercy have no need to fear that they will be treated with hardness. God "will not break the bruised reed," He is gentle toward us. He forgives, uplifts, strengthens and saves.—Mother's Treasury.

609. Blotted Pages.

John Maynard was in an old-time country schoolhouse. Most of the year he had drifted carelessly along, but in midwinter some kind words from his teacher roused him to take a new start, and he became distinctly a different boy and made up for the earlier faults. At the closing examination he passed well, to the great joy of his father and mother, who were present. But the copy-books used through the year were all laid on a table for the visitors to look at; and John remembered that his copy-book, fair enough in its latter pages, had been a dreary mass of blots and bad work before. He watched his mother looking over those books, and his heart was sick. But she seemed, to his surprise, quite pleased with what she saw, and called his father to look with her; and afterward John found that his kind teacher had thoughtfully torn out all those bad, blotted leaves, and made his copy-book begin where he startetd to do better. To all who would forsake sin God offers a new chance and promises to blot out all old sin and make the record begin with the new start.—Rev. Franklin Noble.

610. Forgiveness Not for Sale.

One day a poor girl ventured into the garden of the Queen's palace at Balmoral, and approached the gardener, telling him that her mother was lying very ill, and that she longed for a flower, such as she had seen in the Queen's gardens. It was winter time, and the flowers were rare at that season. The child had saved a few pennies and wished to buy a rose for her sick mother. The gardener had no authority to give away the Queen's flowers, and he said when she offered to pay, "The Queen has no flowers for sale," and would have sent the poor child away. It chanced that the Queen herself was in the greenhouse, and, unobserved either by the gardener or his little customer, had overheard the conversation. As the child was turning away sorrowful and disappointed, the Queen stepped from behind her flowery screen and addressed the child, saying: "The gardener was quite right, my child, he has no authority to give you the flowers you want, nor does the Queen cultivate flowers for sale; but the Queen has flowers to give away;" and, suiting the action to the word, she lifted from the basket into which she had been snipping the flowers a handful of rare roses and gave them to the child, saying: "Take these to your mother with my love, and tell her that the

Queen sent them. I am the Queen." So let me say to you, God has no forgiveness for sale; you cannot buy it with your poor pence of tears, prayers, or repentance; God has forgiveness to give, and you may take it by faith, but not barter for it with anything you can do.—H. F. Sayles.

611. Forgiving Mercy.

Many years ago in Russia a regiment of troops mutinied. They were at some distance from the capital, and were so furious that they murdered their officers, and resolved never to submit to discipline; but the emperor, who was an exceedingly wise and sagacious man, no sooner heard of it than, all alone and unattended, he went into the barracks where the men were drawn up, and, addressing them sternly, he said to them: "Soldiers! you have committed such offences against the law that every one of you deserves to be put to death. There is no hope of any mercy for one of you unless you lay down your arms immediately, and surrender at discretion to me, your emperor." They did so, there and then. The emperor said at once: "Men, I pardon you; you will be the bravest troops I ever had." And so they were. Now, this is just what God does with the sinner. The sinner has dared to rebel against God, and God says: "Now, sinner, you have done that which deserves My wrath. Ground your weapons of rebellion. I will not talk with you until you submit at discretion to My sovereign authority." And then He says: "Believe in My Son; accept Him as your Saviour. This done, you are forgiven, and henceforth you will be the most loving subjects that My hands have made."—W. R. Bradlaugh.

612. Sins Blotted Out.

The Rev. F. B. Meyer tells of a story, taken from Adelaide Proctor, of a young girl who lived centuries ago in a convent in France. She was sweet and pure and admired of all who saw her. Her work was to care for the altar of Mary, and answer the portal. Wars swept over France, and brought the soldiers to the convent, and one that was wounded was given into her care. When he recovered, he persuaded her to leave the convent. She went with him to Paris, where she lost her good name and everything that made life worth living.

Years passed, and she came back to die within the sound of the convent bell. She fell fainting upon the steps, and there came to find her, not such a one as she had been, young and fair, but such a one as she would have been, a pure and noble matron. She picked her up and carried her into the convent, and placed her on her bed. All the years that she had been gone she had faithfully done her work, and none knew of her disgrace; so she glided back into her old place, and until the day of her death no one ever knew her sin. All this Christ has done for me. I like to think that I was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that He had me in mind when He suffered and died, that He has made up before God for all that I have failed to do, and when I stand before Him it will be as if I never had sinned in all my life.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

613. Memory of Forgiveness.

Those who know Dante will remember how, when he came into the last circle of Purgatory on his way Heavenward, he was taken to the brink of two rivers, and given their waters to drink. The first was Lethe, a draught from which cleared the memory of all its stains and scars, its shadows and its corruptions. The second was Eunoe, whose waters brought back to the mind all the happy, soul-lifting recollections of bygone days. With profound insight into the deepest facts of our natures, the great poet there teaches us that God's last, best gift—the key to the soul's true Heaven—is a regenerated memory. But where shall we find the true Lethe and Eunoe of the soul? God in His infinite mercy has provided us with them. God's Lethe is His forgiving love. It flows, sweet and vivifying, from beneath the Cross of our Redeemer. And those who drink of these healing waters are relieved from the incubus of their evil past. Not by forgetting, but by transfiguring the mistakes and failures and sins of the days of old, does this heavenly secret of forgiveness do its blessed work for the soul. It transmutes the torrent of memory into an undying gratitude to Him who has redeemed us by His precious blood, and has enabled us to see in our worst sins the memorials of an Almighty and ever-potent redemption. And Eunoe? What is this but the certainty of God's gracious leadership and kindly discipline? When once we realize how that Hand has led us, and preserved us, and kept us till now, how life's strength has flowed from His sustaining grace, how He has peopled every day with the memorials of His love—then how brightly do even the sorrows of the past shine as we gaze down the checkered vista of our experience!—E. Griffith Jones.

614. Good for Evil.

A good story is told of the magnanimous William McKinley, which shows his kindness to a political enemy. During one of his congressional campaigns he was followed from place to place by a reporter for a paper of opposite political faith, who is described as being one of those "shrewd, persistent fellows who are always at work, quick to see an opportunity, and skilled in making the most of it."

While Mr. McKinley was annoyed by the misrepresentations to which he was almost daily subjected, he could not help admiring the skill and persistency with which he was assailed. His admiration, too, was not unmixed with compassion, for the reporter was ill, poorly clad, and had an annoying cough. One night Mr. McKinley took a closed carriage for a nearby town, at which he was billed to speak. The weather was wretchedly raw and cold, and what followed is thus described: He had not gone far when he heard that cough, and knew that the reporter was riding with the driver in the exposed seat. The major called to the driver to stop, and alighted. "Get down off that seat, young man," he said. The reporter obeyed, thinking the time for the major's vengeance had come. "Here," said Mr. McKinley, taking off his overcoat, "you put on this overcoat and get into that carriage."

"But, Major McKinley," said the reporter, "I guess you don't know who I am. I have been with you through the whole campaign, giving it to you every time you spoke, and I am going over tonight to rip you to pieces if I can."

"I know," said Mr. McKinley, "but you put on this coat and get inside and get warm so you can do a good job."—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

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615. Great Bell of St. Paul's.

The great bell of St. Paul's, which tells Londoners the hour, has inscribed upon it these words: "Richard Phelps made me, 1709." It is a huge bell nearly seven feet in diameter, and unusually musical. A hammer connected with clockwork strikes the hours and tolls the bell on funeral occasions. The clapper of the bell is used for tolling upon the death of a member of the royal family, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the Dean of St. Paul's or the Lord Mayor of London.

There is an interesting story of how this bell saved a man's life. The story goes that a sentinel on duty at Windsor Castle was accused by the guard who came to relieve him of sleeping at his post. This sentinel was a soldier in the reign of William and Mary. He was tried by court-martial and condemned for sleeping at his post upon the terrace of Windsor. The soldier denied the charge and insisted that he had not slept at his post. As a proof that he had been awake while on duty he declared that on midnight on that particular night he heard the great bell of St. Paul's strike 13 times instead of 12.

The Court did not believe that it was possible for the soldier to have heard the bell of St. Paul's so far away. However, while the poor fellow was under sentence of death it was proved by many who heard it that, at midnight, on the night referred to, the clock actually did strike 13 times instead of 12. The mechanism was out of order. The king straightway pardoned the soldier, who lived to be 100 years old. What music St. Paul's bell must have always been in that man's ears!—Kings' Treasures.

616. Pardon Refused.

When missionary at Dorchester, I frequently visited the penitentiary there. One day an officer called my attention to a prisoner and related this story of him: When a young man he had been convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to life-imprisonment. After several years, her majesty, Queen Victoria, granted a pardon. The world, however, had lost its attraction, and after a few days' liberty he returned to prison, requesting to be re-admitted. His request was granted and he remained at Halifax until the Maritime Penitentiary was built at Dorchester, and the long-term prisoners removed thereto. When the prisoners were marched from the depot to the penitentiary, all but this man were hand-cuffed and strictly guarded. He followed the line at a little distance, and requested a place in the new institution, where he had been for several years when I saw him. By the grace of his sovereign a free man, entitled upon request to a full suit of civilian's clothing, clad in which the great prison gate would open for him as readily as for the warden himself. Yet, so long as he preferred prison life, he must submit to prison discipine. He must wear that gloomy prison garb. When the bell rang at six o'clock he must fall into line with the others, be satisfied with prison fare, and at the appointed hour return to his cell, where the iron door closed upon him, where again he listened to the heavy bolt grating harshly in the lock and where night after night the receding steps of the turnkey revived the consciousness that he was still a prisoner. What strange frenzy had taken possession of the man? And how like thousands living to-day! —The Homiletic Review.

617. Second Chance.

William Scott was a soldier lad from a Vermont town. He fell asleep at his post. He had great provocation, for he had been without rest for forty-eight hours. The army was at Chain Bridge, the neighborhood was dangerous, and discipline must be kept. A court-martial sentenced the man to be shot. Then the kind offices of Abraham Lincoln were sought. The day preceding the proposed execution the great-hearted President appeared at the tent of William Scott, and asked him many questions about himself, his family, and his circumstances. Finally he said: "My boy, stand up here and look me in the face. You are not going to be shot to-morrow. I believe you when you tell me that you could not keep awake. I am going to trust you and send you back to your regiment. But I have been put to a great deal of trouble on your account. I have had to come up here from Washington, when I have a great deal to do; and what I want to know is, how are you going to pay my bill?"

With his heart welling up in his throat, William Scott expressed his gratitude in the best terms his embarrassment would permit. He said that he had not thought the matter out, it had come upon him so suddenly, but there was his bounty in the savings bank, and some money he thought could be raised by mortgaging the farm at home. His own pay was something, and he believed the boys of his regiment would help him a little on pay-day. Altogether it seemed probable to him that five or six hundred dollars could be made up, if that would be sufficient. "But the bill is a great deal more than that," said Mr. Lincoln. Then the condemned man replied that, though he did not quite see his way clear to do it, he would—if he lived—find some plan for paying the great debt. Then the President put his hands on the shoulders of William Scott, and looked into his face and said: "My boy, my bill is a very large one. Your friends cannot pay it, nor your bounty, nor the farm, nor all your comrades. There is only one man in all the world who can pay it, and his name is William Scott. If from this day William Scott does his duty, so that if I should be present when he came to die, he could look me in the face as he does now, and say, 'I have kept my promise, and I have done my duty as a soldier, then my debt will be paid.' Will you make that promise and try to keep it?" The promise was given, and it was kept nobly. In one of the fights in the Peninsula William Scott fell wounded to the death, and said to his comrades: "If any of you ever have the chance, I wish you would tell President Lincoln that I have never forgotten the kind words he said to me at Chain Bridge, and, now that I am dying, I want to thank him again because he gave me the chance to fall like a soldier in battle, and not like a coward by the hands of my comrades." Well could Secretary Stanton say of Lincoln as he gazed upon the face of the stricken President: "There lies the most perfect ruler of men that ever lived." Lincoln saved a life to the nation by his compassion, and that life was freely poured out for the nation when the opportunity for sacrifice presented itself.

That was Christ's way of redeeming the lost. He came not to judge, not to condemn, but to pity, to love, to forgive, to win the erring to righteousness.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

618. Revenge.

Governor Stewart, of Missouri, recognized, in a convict he was about to pardon a steamboat mate under whom he served as cabin-boy. He said: "I want you to promise that you will never again take a stick of wood and drive a sick boy out of his berth on a stormy night, because some day that boy may be governor, and you may want him to pardon you for another crime. I was that boy. Here is your pardon."—John F. Cowan.

619. Love to an Enemy.

During the American Revolutionary War there was living, in Pennsylvania, Peter Miller, pastor of a little Baptist church. Near the church lived a man who secured an unenviable notoriety by his abuse of Miller and the Baptists. He was also guity of treason, and was for this sentenced to death. No sooner was the sentence pronounced than Peter Miller set out on foot to visit George Washington, at Philadelphia, to intercede for the man's life. He was told that his prayer could not be granted. "My friend," exclaimed Miller, "I have not a worse enemy living than that man." "What," rejoined Washington, "you have walked sixty miles to save the life of your enemy? That, in my judgment, puts the matter in a different light. I will grant you his pardon." The pardon was made out, and Miller at once proceeded on foot to a place fifteen miles distant, where the execution was to take place on the afternoon of the same day. He arrived just as the man was being carried to the scaffold, who, seeing Miller in the crowd, remarked: "There is old Peter Miller. He has walked all the way from Ephrata to have his revenge gratified to-day by seeing me hung." These words were scarcely spoken before Miller gave him his pardon, and his life was spared.—C. H. Spurgeon.

620. Christ Sets Free the Sinful.

I have heard that a great English prince on one occasion went to visit a famous king of Spain. The prince was taken down to the galleys to see the men who were chained to the oars and doomed to be slaves for life. The King of Spain promised, in honour of the prince's visit, that he would set free any one of these men that the prince might choose. So the prince went to one prisoner and said: "My poor fellow, I am sorry to see you in this plight; how came you here?" "Ah! sire," he answered, "false witnesses gave evidence against me; I am suffering wrongfully." "Indeed!" said the prince, and passed on to the next man. "My poor fellow, I am sorry to see you here; how did it happen?" "Sire, I certainly did wrong, but not to any great extent. I ought not to be here." "Indeed!" said the prince, and he went on to others who told him similar tales. At last he came to one prisoner, who said: "Sire, I am often thankful that I am here, for I am sorry to own that if I had received my due I should have been executed. I am certainly guilty of all that was laid to my charge, and my severest punishment is just." The prince replied wittily to him, "It is a pity that such a guilty wretch as you are should be chained among these innocent men, and therefore I will set you free." —C. H. Spurgeon.

PERSONAL WORK.

621. Personal Work.

Dr. Pentecost tells how, with some trepidation, he once ventured to ask a great man if he were a Christian. Courteously the man answered and allowed him to continue the conversation. At the close, Pentecost said: "I hope you have not considered me impertinent in speaking so abruptly on this subject." Grasping his hands, with tears in his eyes, he answered: "Don't ever hesitate to speak to any man about his soul. I have been longing for twenty years to have some one speak to me. I believe there are thousands of men in this city who are in the same condition that I am, carrying an uneasy conscience and a great burden on their souls, not courageous enough to seek instruction, yet who would willingly receive it."—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

622. How to Win Souls.

Dr. Theodore Cuyler once said concerning the 3,000 souls he had received into the church during his ministry: "I have handled every stone." A lot of men were imprisoned in a coal mine, as the result of an accident. Great crowds gathered to help to clear away the earth and rescue the men. An old, grey-headed man came running up, and, seizing a shovel, began to work with the strength of ten men. Some one offered to relieve the old man. "Get out of the way!" he cried. "I have two boys down there." Nothing but love for the souls of the unsaved can help to provide a way of escape for them. Five things the personal worker needs: A converted heart, a Scripture-stored mind, a love for souls, a prayerful life, the Spirit of God. Dr. Talmage once said: "Brethren, do not go fishing for souls with a crawfish for bait, a log-chain for a line, a weaver's beam for a pole, and then scream, "Bite, or be lost forever!" Spurgeon wisely says: "If a man is to be a soul-winner, there must be in him intensity of emotion as well as sincerity of heart. You may repeat the most affectionate exhortations in such a half-hearted manner that no one will be moved either by love or fear. I believe that for soul-winning there is more in this matter than in almost anything else.—Homilist.

623. Personal Touch Wins.

A noted evangelist was once holding a series of services in a church whose minister was a man of long experience and of great influence. One night as they sat on the platform together the minister pointed out to the evangelist a man in the audience.

"For twelve years," he said, "I have tried to win that man to Christ; I have preached to him so long that I sometimes find myself doing it almost unconsciously."

"From the pulpit?" asked the evangelist.

"From the pulpit, yes."

"How many times have you gone to him with the love of God in your heart and said: 'I want to see you become a child of God?'"

"I must confess," said the minister, "that I have never spoken to him personally and directly concerning his salvation."

"Then," said the evangelist, "perhaps he is not impregnable after all."

That night the evangelist, after the service, caught the man before he got to the door. He spoke only a few words, but they were earnest and loving. And the next evening in the "after service," in which many souls have found lasting peace and eternal life, the man was on his knees with the tears streaming down his cheeks. It was the personal touch that did it.

The sermon is effective with many. Music has brought salvation to many a life. But on thousands and thousands of cases it is only the personal touch that wins. —William Thomas McElroy.

624. Personal Touch.

A gentleman once visited a great jewelry store, owned by a friend. His friend showed him magnificent diamonds, and other splendid stones. Amongst these stones his eye lighted on one that seemed quite lustreless, and, pointing to it, he said: "That has no beauty at all." But his friend put it in the hollow of his hand, and shut his hand, and then in a few moments opened it again. What a surprise! The entire stone gleamed with all the splendours of the rainbow. "What have you done to it?" asked the astonished gazer. His friend answered: "This is an opal. It is what we call the sympathetic jewel. It only needs to be gripped with the human hand to bring out its wonderful beauty."—A. C. Price.

625. Personal Contact with Souls.

As I recall my own ministerial experience I can testify that nearly all the converting work has been by personal contact with souls. For example, I once recognized in the congregation a newcomer, and at my first visit to his house was strongly drawn to him as a very noble-hearted, manly character. A long talk with him seemed to produce little impression; but before I left, he took me upstairs to see his three or four rosy children in their cribs. As we stood looking at the sleeping cherubs, I said to him: "My friend, what sort of father are you going to be to these children? Are you going to lead them towards heaven, or—the other way?" That arrow lodged. He gave himself to Christ, and at our next communion season he was at the Master's table, and soon became a most useful officer in the church.—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.

626. Saved to Serve.

I once knew an old man who was possessed with a mania for buying up wheels of all sorts. A wheel, whether from a wagon, a cart or a wheel-barrow, possessed peculiar attractions for him; and yet in all his life he never owned even a wheel-barrow. He did not put his wheels to any use. He is a pretty good counterpart of the man the ultimatum of whose idea of successful church work is that of getting people to join the church. A good many churches where this idea has been followed up are, therefore, practically nothing more than a heap of wheels and bolts and bars that are of no use because they have been put to none.

"Saved to serve" is a good motto, but it implies more than we are sometimes disposed to take into consideration. It means that we must train people as well as save them. It is not enough that we induce men and women to be good; we are to see to it that they are put in the way of becoming good for something.—Mattie M. Boteler.

627. Courage of a Fireman.

In New York City there was a great fire in a tenement house crowded with women and children. The fire extended through the building so rapidly that a number of the inmates were cut off from the fire escapes and huddled together in a corner of the roof, which was almost ready to fall in. The whole interior of the building was a mass of flames, and it was almost certain death to enter the building. A fireman, covered with a wet blanket and carrying a rope, made a dash through the flames and somehow reached the room. He quickly let down all but one of the children, when the flames burst out around him, setting his clothes on fire, and the walls began to fall outwards. It was an awful moment, and the spectators held their breaths. With the flames enveloping him, but without thought of saving himself, he lowered that last child, when the walls crumbled beneath him and he was buried beneath the ruins. It was magnificent devotion, but at the loss of a noble heart; and the whole city mourned the death of a hero.—James Terry White.

628. Soul-Winning Power.

I hesitated to give up my conception of certain doctrines, especially the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. I used to sneer at any such thing as a separate reception of the Holy Spirit from that of regeneration; but all this time I was conscious of the fact that the Lord was greatly using men who claimed the very opposite of what I believed. This made me somewhat restless, and, finally, there fell into my hands "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life," which made me more restless but did not reveal the light which I needed. About this time I attended a convention known as a Holy Spirit Convention. Many of my church members advised me against going; they said it was a meeting of cranks and fanatics, and that one of my enthusiastic nature could not afford to go. But I had gotten the consent of my mind to be nothing that I might be used of God.

The first night of the convention a brother spoke on the Holy Spirit from the text, "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" At once it seemed to me the Lord said, "There is your trouble"; and, when he had finished, he made a call for those who would surrender everything and come out wholly for Christ, and by faith look up and receive the promised power, to come and kneel, and by faith accept. This I did. It was a struggle, but it was a victory.

When I went back to my seat a friend asked me: "Have you received?"

I said: "Yes."

He said: "How do you feel?"

I said: "I didn't ask for feeling; I was asking for the Holy Spirit."

"How do you know you have anything more than you have had?"

"I know it," said I, "just as I know I have Christ; I know it by faith!"

From that time forward God, the Holy Ghost, has been more to me than ever before. Within the next four years God gave me more than four hundred souls to baptize into the fellowship of my church.—L. G. Broughton.

629. False Dignity.

A. C. Dixon says when he first began street preaching in Baltimore, a member of his church came to him and said it was not dignified enough for their preacher. Dixon told that brother that he did not remember that that word "dignity" was used in the Bible but once, and that it was somewhere in Proverbs:

"The way of the dignified is the way of a fool."

Away with ministerial and church dignity that breeds death! The most dignified thing I ever saw was an Egyptian mummy, over two thousand five hundred years old.

If you want dignity, there it is! Put it down, brother, that the more dignity, the more death. We want hearts, we want life and sympathy in our worship; and if our pride will not admit of such worship, we've got no business in the church, and the church, if it has religion enough left, ought to turn us out and start afresh. Society—social position and influence—is not what we want. This would elevate for a time. We need power to save the lost, whether they be in the gutter or in the palace.—L. G. Broughton.

630. Keeping Your Vow.

Are you keeping your vow? Take your devotion for your church. Don't you remember, when you were converted, how you loved the services of the church? I remember when I first experienced a change of heart—it was in an old school-house in the country. My mother was by my side talking to me. I felt a load roll away from my heart, and I felt good. They were singing that good old hymn:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power."

I shall never forget my feelings. I wanted to stay there all night and sing. Many years have passed; mother has gone to heaven; the old log house has been torn down; but I love that spot.

You felt that way, too. I fancy, when Sunday morning came, you were the first in Sunday School. You were always on hand at prayer-meeting. But how about it to-day? It was so in your giving. At first you gave your money liberally and freely; but now it takes a dozen church collectors to dun it out of you, and you growl and whine over coppers when you then rejoiced in dollars. How about your vows, brother?—L. G. Broughton.

631. Soul-Winning Invalid.

Dr. J. G. K. McClure tells about an invalid woman residing at Springfield, Illinois, who had been bed-ridden for seventeen years, and was almost helpless. For many years she had been praying to God in a general way to save souls. One day she asked for pen and paper. "She wrote down the names of fifty-seven acquaintances. She prayed for each of these by name three times a day. She wrote them letters telling them of her interest in them. She also wrote to Christian friends, in whom she knew these persons had confidence, and urged them to speak to these persons about their souls' welfare and to do their best to persuade them to repent and believe. She had unquestioning faith in God. In her humble, earnest dependence upon Him she thus interceded for the unsaved. In time every one of those fifty-seven persons avowed faith in Jesus Christ as his Saviour."

632. Unfinished Statue.

Among the art treasures of Rome there is a mysterious statue. It represents a barbarian king in chains—one of those tall fair-haired men of the North—men of our own blood—who, even when they stood in captivity before their Roman conquerors, extorted admiration by their splendid physique and their royal dignity of bearing. The peculiarity of this statue is that it has never been finished. The work is wrought with great care and skill up to a certain point—then it suddenly stops short. Conjecture has been busy about the statue. Why did the sculptor stop, after having done so much? Was the reason caprice, or accident, or sudden death, or impatience at his failure to realize the ideal aimed at? Who can tell? The secret lies buried in a forgotten past. But He who labours at the chiselling of new men and women in Christ never loses patience, never tires of His task. Obstacles may delay, but they can never finally baffle His sublime purpose.—Martin Lewis.

633. Win Somebody to Christ.

That is a most interesting and instructive story told of the nobly gifted Boston preacher, Dr. O. P. Gifford, who preached one morning to his congregation, making the insistence that it is the business, primary and fundamental, of Christ's people to go out constantly and win others to the knowledge of the Saviour. And as he brought to bear his message upon his waiting auditors, with words that breathed and thoughts that burned, the minister went on to say: "Every Christian can win somebody to Christ." When the sermon was done and the people were sent away, there tarried behind one of his humblest auditors—probably the humblest, with reference to this world's goods, for she was a poor seamstress. She tarried behind to make her plea to the preacher that his sermon was overstressed. Greatly moved she was, the preacher stated, as looking him in the face she said: "Pastor, this is the first time that I ever heard you when you seemed to be unfair." "Pray, wherein was I unfair?" he asked. Then she said: "You kept crowding the truth down upon us that every Christian could win somebody to Christ. Now, you did not make any exceptions, and surely I am an exception. Pray, tell me what could I do? I am but a poor seamstress, and I sew early and late to get enough to keep the wolf from the door for my fatherless children, and I have no education and no opportunity, and yet your statement was so sweeping that even I was included, and in that," she said, "I think you were unfair—the first time I ever knew you to be so." And then, when she had finished her vehement protest, he looked down at her in all her agitation, and said to her: "Does anybody ever come to your house?" She said: "Why, certainly, a few people come there." And then, waiting a moment, he said: "Does the milkman ever come?" "To be sure," she said, "every morning he comes." "Does the breadman come?" "Every day he comes." "Does the meatman come?" "Every day he comes to my cottage." Then, waiting a moment for his questions to have their due effect, looking down earnestly at her, he said: "A word to the wise is sufficient," and he turned upon his heel, abruptly leaving her. She went her way, and the night came and she went to her bed to ponder late and long the searching message she had heard that morning. Why, she had not even tried to win somebody to Christ. She had never made the effort. She claimed to be Christ's friend, and yet had never opened her lips for Him at all. She will try, and she will begin with her first opportunity tomorrow, even with the coming of the milkman. Accordingly she was up before the daylight came, there waiting, if haply she might speak to him some word concerning personal religion. When he greeted her, he made the remark that he had never seen her up quite so early before, and she stammered out some embarrassing reply, not saying what she came to say, and now he had left her, and the gate clicked behind him as he left. Then she summoned her strength and called him back. "Wait a minute," she pleaded, "I did have something to say to you." And when he tarried to hear it, she poured out her heart to him in the query: "Do you know Christ? Are you a Christian? Are you the friend and follower of the glorious Saviour who came down from heaven and died, that you might not forever die?" And fairly dropping his milk-pails, he looked into her face with anguish in his own, as he said to her: "Little woman, what on earth provoked you to talk to me like this? Here for two nights, madam, I have been unable to sleep, and the burden of it all is that I am not a Christian, and I am in the darkness. If you know how to find the light, you are the one I need, and you should tell me." And there, in a few brief minutes of conversation, she told him how she had found the light, and he walked in that simple path she indicated for him. And Dr. Gifford goes on to tell us that before that year was out, that same little seamstress had won seven adults to Christ, not only to the open confession of Christ as their Saviour, but to take their places promptly in His church. You can win somebody to Christ.—George W. Truett, D.D.

634. Catching Fish.

Seeking diversion by fishing in the streams of Scotland, a literary man went from the city with patent pole and a complete outfit of the most expensive kind. After hours of effort without even a bite, he came across a country boy with only a switch for a pole and a bent pin for a hook—but he had a long string of fish.

"Why is it I can't catch any?" the man inquired.

"Because you don't keep yourself out of sight," the boy quietly replied.

This is the secret of fishing for men as well as trout. Hold up the cross of Christ. Send the people away talking about Him instead of praising you.—The Volunteer.

635. Cry of Distress.

A friend asked a life-saver at Newport, R. I., how he could tell when any one of the thousands of persons on the beach and in the water was in need of help, to which he replied: "There has never been a time when I could not distinguish the cry of distress above all other noises." And that is exactly like God. In the midst of the babel and confusion He never fails to hear the soul that cries out to Him for help amid the breakers and storms of life.—The Expositor.

636. Need of Humblest Christian.

One of Beethoven's most famous concertos was suggested to him as he heard repeated knocks in the stillness of the night at a neighbor's door. The concerto begins with four soft taps of the drum—raised in this work to the rare dignity of a solo instrument. Again and again the four beats are heard throughout the music, making a wonderful effect. God uses even the humblest player. A man who can play only a drum can be made valuable in the music of the world. —Christian Register.

637. Got His Man.

During the Civil War an Indiana regiment was sent into battle before the recruits had received any training. They were ordered to charge. When they had encountered the fire of the enemy, wavered, broke, and fell back, one young soldier kept straight on. He had heard the order to capture the intrenchment. When he reached the parapet and climbed it, he encountered a gunner ready to fire. He instantly seized him, whirled him about and, finding him alone, started for his regiment with his prisoner. The enemy did not shoot, fearing to kill their own man, and the raw recruit came safely back. To the astonished questioning of his comrades as to where he got the man, he replied: "Why, up there! And there's lots more of them up there. All of you fellows might have had one if you had only kept on."—Sunday School Times.

638. Light That Cheers.

During a damp, foggy evening along the New England shore, a summer resident who had been skirting the beach in a rowboat was struggling at the oars, trying to drive his little craft through the waters despite the drag upon it of a heavy object towing on behind. It was a dismal evening, and he was tired and weary of his attempted task. But just when his depression was greatest he heard the voice of his little boy hailing him from the beach. Looking through the gloom he could discern the faint glow on the shore, while his boy called encouragingly, "Papa, I'll cheer you with this lantern!" The heart of the father was gladdened, and his work after that seemed light, for so great is the power of loving sympathy that it illumines all shadows and lightens all tasks.

"I'll cheer you with this lantern!" We all of us hold in our hands some instruments of blessing, whether they be lanterns or not, by the use of which, if we are alert to note the changing necessities of those about us, we can every now and then cast a gladdening or directing ray over life's dark waters, or extend some other "help in time of need" to a troubled brother.—C. A. Dwight.

639. Impertinent Question.

On the train last summer a young girl was fairly boiling over with indignation at a preacher who had been asking her some plain questions about her soul. "Why, he even asked me if I were sure I was really on the road to heaven," she said. "He had no right to talk like that to me, and to make me feel perfectly dreadful."

"What did the brakeman say to you when you boarded the train?" her friend asked.

"Why, he only asked me where I was going?"

"And you didn't mind it at all. You knew that he was asking you to save you from a possible mistake. The preacher had the same motive, only the case was a good deal more serious."

The young woman is only one of a very large class who consider it an intrusion when you concern yourselves about their lack of concern. There is one thing here worth noting; whenever questions like this are disturbing us, it is pretty conclusive proof that we are shutting our eyes to danger.—Mattie M. Boteler.

640. Energy Put into a Man.

Sir Alexander Ball was one of those great men who adorned our navy at the end of the eighteenth century. The following anecdote is told of him by his friend the poet Coleridge. "In a large party at Malta I had observed a naval officer listening to Sir A. Ball with a mixed expression of awe and affection that gave a more than common interest to so manly a countenance. This officer afterwards told me that he considered himself indebted to Sir Alexander for that which was dearer to him than his life. "When he was Lieutenant Ball," said he, "he was the officer I accompanied in my first boat expedition, being then a midshipman, and only in my fourteenth year. As we were rowing up to the vessel which we were to attack, amid a discharge of musketry, I was overpowered by fear, and seemed on the point of fainting away. Lieutenant Ball, who saw the condition I was in, placed himself close beside me, and still keeping his countenance directed towards the enemy, pressed my hand in the most friendly manner, and said in a low voice, "Courage, my dear boy. You will recover in a minute or so. I was just the same when I first went out in this way." "Sir," added the officer to me, "it was just as if an angel had put a new soul into me. With the feeling I was not yet dishonored, the whole burden of agony was removed; and from that moment I was as fearless and forward as the oldest of the boat's crew."—S. T. Coleridge.

641. Incidental Results.

It is told of Thorwaldsen, the Danish sculptor, that when he returned to his native land with those rare works of art which have made his name immortal, the servants, who unpacked the statuary, scattered upon the ground the straw which was wrapped around the marble works. There were unseen seeds in that straw, and soon there were flowers from the gardens of Rome blooming in the gardens of Copenhagen. The artist, while pursuing his glorious purpose and leaving magnificent results in marble, was unconsciously scattering sweet flowers, whose beauty and perfume were to refresh and gladden his native city years after his hand was as cold as the chisel it once so magically moved.—Pulpit Treasury.

642. Pure Religion.

When Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer the following incident was related to me by my friend Sir Francis Crossley, told to him by the Rector of St. Martin's in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, whose church Mr. Gladstone attended. The rector had visited one of his parishioners, a street-sweeper, who was ill, and being asked if any one had been to see him, he replied, "Yes, Mr. Gladstone." "What Gladstone?" "Why Mr. Gladstone himself. He often speaks to me at my crossing, and missing me he asked my mate if I was ill and where I lived, and so came to see me and read the Bible to me."—Newman Hall's "Autobiography."

643. Lost Opportunity.

A man was sitting at twilight dreaming in his easy chair. He thought he saw the figure of a beautiful being glide into the room and approach him with outstretched hands. He gazed upon the angelic creature, and was filled with delight at her graceful movements and the radiance that shone about her. He wondered greatly what was the meaning of this apparition, but made no motion himself until he saw the figure begin to draw back and gradually to fade from his sight. Then he came suddenly to the consciousness that he was about to lose entirely the presence of this bright being, and, springing from his chair, sought to detain her. But the form vanished, and when he called out to her to return, a voice replied sadly: "You should have held me while I was there. My name is Lost Opportunity. I can never come again."—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

644. Freezing to Death.

A man was making his way over the mountains through a terrible snow-storm. He gradually got weaker and weaker, until at last he stumbled and fell. He said to himself: "This is the end. I shall never be found." He was too weak to rise, but as he fell his hand struck the body of another man who had fallen in the same place. This first man was unconscious, and the man who had just fallen rose to his knees and, bending over the prostrate form, began to chafe his hands and to rub his face, until by and by the man's eyes opened. He had saved another's life, but he had also saved himself, for the exercise had kept the life in his own body. And when you have a passion for souls, when you go seeking the lost, when you lift the burdens of others, your own vision of Jesus is clearer, your own hope of eternity is stronger, your own assurance of salvation is greater.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

645. Missing Stone.

A man dreamed that when he died he was taken by the angels to a beautiful temple. After admiring it for a time, he discovered that one stone was missing. All finished but just one little stone; that was left out. He said to the angel: "What is this stone left out for?" The angel replied: "That was left out for you, but you were waiting to do great things, and so this was never finished." He was startled and woke, and resolved that he would become a faithful worker for God in little things.—D. L. Moody.

646. Buttonhole Christians.

An incident is related which occurred during Mr. Finney's meetings in New York City, and which will illustrate the value of a little tact in the great struggle for souls. The big cutlery firm of Sheffield, England, had a branch house in New York. The manager was a partner of the firm and very worldly. One of his clerks, who had been converted in the meetings, invited his employer to attend. One evening he was there and sat across the aisle from Mr. Arthur Tappan. He appeared affected during the sermon, and Mr. Tappan kept his eye on him. After the dismissal, Mr. Tappan stepped quickly across the aisle, introduced himself, and invited him to stay to the after-service. The gentleman tried to excuse himself and get away, but Mr. Tappan caught hold of the button on his coat and said: "Now, do stay; I know you will enjoy it," and he was so kind and gentlemanly that the cutlery man could not well refuse. He stayed and was led to Christ. Afterwards he said: "An ounce of weight upon my coat-button saved my soul." More "buttonhole Christians" are needed.—S. D. Gordon.

647. Instant in Season.

It is told in the Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers that he spent an evening at Edgarstoun in the house of Mr. Rutherford. "His amiable wife was by the library fire with her sister-in-law, and Mr. Brown, a remarkably large stout man of seventy-two. He had been a parishioner in Cavers when Dr. Chalmers was assistant there, and the greetings and cordial inquiries between them were quite animated. We fell into devout discourse presently, and conversed till late." At length the company retired to rest, but in the early morning they were roused by a cry. Mr. Brown had suddenly been stricken down by death, and in a moment had been called from time into eternity. Chalmers suffered an agony of self-reproach that he had not spoken to him urgently of Christ. "It was touching to see him sit down on a bank repeatedly with tears in his eyes, and say: 'Ah! God has rebuked me; I know now what St. Paul means by being instant in season and out of season. Had I addressed that old man last night with urgency it might have seemed out of season to human eyes, but how seasonable it would have been.'"—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

648. Save One!

A man once rose in one of Mr. Moody's meetings and gave his experience. "I have been for five years on the Mount of Transfiguration." "How many souls did you lead to Christ last year?" was the sharp question that came from Mr. Moody, in an instant. "Well, I don't know," was the astonished reply. "Have you led any?" persisted Mr. Moody. "I don't know that I have," answered the man. "Well," said Mr. Moody, "we don't want that kind of mountain-top experience. When a man gets so high that he can't reach down and save poor sinners, there is something wrong."—S. S. Chronicle.

649. "Mister, Are You There?"

A New York Sunday School superintendent urged his teachers to bring new scholars with them the next Sunday, and as he walked down Sixth Avenue attempted himself to win a street boy. "Will you go to Sunday School?" he said, and in the vernacular of the street the boy said, "Nope." The superintendent said: "We have picture papers for every boy," and he would not come. "We have music, we have everything to make you have a good time," and the boy steadily refused. Disappointed, the superintendent turned away and, when he had gone a short distance, he heard the patter of little feet behind him and, turning back, he saw the boy. He said with an earnest, eager look: "Mister, are you there?" and the superintendent said, "Yes, I am there." "Well," he said, "next Sunday I'll be there." And he was. Sunday School papers, music, and other attractions of school were simply the first mile, the spirit of the superintendent was the second mile, and was an influence the boy could not shake off.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

650. Turning Points.

Do you remember that touching story Gough tells of himself—how once he lay brutalized and insensible with drink in the gutter, with the full sun of summer pouring down on his unsheltered face? Many persons passed him in the public way, and doubtless turned, with shuddering contempt, from so foul a sight. If ever any man looked helplessly lost and ruined it must have been Gough, as he lay like a hog in the gutter that day. But at length there drew near him a woman with a Christ-like heart in her, and she pitied him. She could not lift him to his feet, it was useless to address him, so what did she do? She noted how the sun beat perilously on the bloated face, and, taking out her handkerchief, she gently laid it on that face, and went away. Presently Gough awoke. He felt the handkerchief, and began to ask how it got there. At last it dawned upon him that some true heart had pitied him, and he said to himself—I am deep enough down, God knows, but some one has thought me worth pitying, and if I am worth pitying I am worth saving!" It was the turning-point of Gough's life.—W. J. Dawson.

651. The Human Touch.

An old potter, who was shaping the clay into the desired shape by his hands, was asked by a visitor: "Why don't you have machinery to do that?" The old man replied: "We have tried all kinds of machinery and failed; somehow it needs the human touch." God has work that can not be done by machinery.—H. F. Sayles.

652. You Can Not Get in Alone.

A priest had a striking dream. He dreamed he had ascended the ladder that reached from earth to heaven. Expectantly he knocked upon the door. Some one responded and demanded, "Who is there?" Proudly the priest called his name. "Who is with you?" came the reply. "No one," answered the priest, "I am alone." "Sorry," said the angel, "but we are instructed never to open these gates for a single individual." And, crestfallen and disappointed, he descended to earth.—Sunday School Times.

653. "I Serve."

At the battle of Crecy, in 1346, when King Edward III of England defeated Philip, King of France, the Black Prince led a portion of the attack. Thinking himself very hotly pressed in the midst of the combat, he sent word to his father to send him some reinforcements at once or he would be flanked by the enemy. The king, who had been watching the progress of the fight from a neighboring hill-top, sent down word as follows: "Tell my son, the Black Prince, that I am too good a general not to know when he needs help, and too kind a father not to send it when I see the need of doing so." The historian tells us that, reassured by this promise, the Black Prince fought nobly, and put the motto Ich Dien, "I serve," upon his crest, which is on the Prince of Wales' escutcheon to this day.—J. L. Nye.

654. Sincere But Mistaken.

In an English exchange we find the following incident a true occurrence: I was going west one time during the winter. The train had two engines ploughing along. There was a woman with a little baby in her arms who wanted to leave the train at a certain small station where they stop the train if you come from a distance. The brakeman came in and called the name of the station when we were getting near it. The woman said: "Don't forget me," and he replied, "Sure." There was a man there who said, "Lady, I will see that the brakeman doesn't forget you—don't you worry." A little later he said: "Here's your station." She hopped out of the train into the storm. . . . The train had gone on about three-quarters of a mile when the brakeman came in and said: "Where's that woman?" The traveller said: "She got out." The brakeman said: "Then she has gone to her death; we only stopped the train yonder because there was something the matter with the engine." They called for volunteers and went back and looked for her. They searched for hours and found her on the prairies covered with a shroud of snow and ice, with the babe folded to her breast. She followed the man's directions, but they were wrong. How great that man's responsibility, greater still that of the preacher who, instead of telling lost men of God's way of salvation by the atoning blood, obscures the cross and sends men into eternal darkness! — H. F. Sayles.

655. Encourage Fellow-Workers.

Yonder was a fire in the large city, and the firemen flung their ladders together and went up in their brave fashion to the topmost story to rescue the people in such peril, and one after another was rescued by the brave fire laddies. All had been rescued, it seemed. No! Yonder is a white face at that upper window, and they wrapped something about one of the fire laddies and, breasting the fierce flames, he went again to that window and put the robe around the little woman and started down, but they saw him tremble as the fire raged around him, and it seemed that he would fall with his precious burden, but the fire chief called to his men: "Cheer him, boys! Cheer him, boys!" And they cheered him, cheer after cheer, and heart came back, and he came down with the precious life saved. Oh, you and I are to give our lives to cheering a needy world! Ponder this beautiful sentence from Isaiah: "They helped every one his neighbor; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage."—George W. Truett, D.D.

656. "Thou Art the Finger."

A writer in the *Sunday School Times* tells how, during a season of revival, a friend was praying one evening for a certain unconverted neighbor. After this manner he prayed: "O Lord, touch him with Thy finger, Lord!"

The petition was repeated with great earnestness, when something said to him:

"Thou art the finger of God. Hast thou ever touched thy neighbor? Hast thou ever spoken a single word to him on the question of salvation? Go, thou, and touch that man, and thy prayer shall be answered."

It was a voice from the throne. God's servant arose from his knees self-condemned. He had known the man as an impenitent for a quarter of a century, yet he had uttered not a word of warning. Hundreds of opportunities had come and gone, but the supreme question of life had been set aside for such topics as "the weather," "the latest news," "politics," "trade," etc. His first duty as a Christian had been left undone.

"As we, therefore, have opportunity, let us do good unto all men."—H. F. Sayles.

657. Spiritual Activity.

The poets tell us of a firefly in southern climates, said to be the most brilliant of all fireflies, which has this peculiarity, that it never shines at all except when going rapidly upon the wing, and then its brilliancy can be seen afar. So it is with our immortal souls. When we are upon the wing, active and advancing, going forward in the Christian race toward God and toward Heaven, our light shines out and all men see it; but when we stand still, it dies.—Christian Age.

658. Doing Good.

An eminent surgeon, who was also an eminent Christian, visited a lady who was a professed believer in Christ, but who, like some ladies I have heard of, was frequently troubled with imaginary diseases. The good doctor was frequently called in, until at last he said to her: "Madam, I will give you a prescription which I am certain will make a healthy woman of you, if you will follow it." "Sir," she said, "I shall be so glad to have good health that I will be sure to follow it." "Madam, I will send you the prescription this evening." When it arrived it consisted of these words, "Do good to somebody." She roused herself to relieve a poor neighbor, and then sought out others who needed her help, and the Christian woman, who had been so constantly desponding and nervous, became a healthy, cheerful woman, for she had an object to live for, and found joy in doing good to others. —C. H. Spurgeon.

659. Individual Effort.

Do not forget individual souls. There is a great rage nowadays for large congregations and for prominent work; but do not forget individual souls. I think it was Roland Hill who used to say that if he had a number of bottles before him, and he were to dash water over them, a drop might go into this one and a drop into that; but he said, "If I take one bottle and pour water into it, I fill it up to the brim." And so it is with individual souls. There is a personality in the application which cannot be estimated if we are speaking face to face in an honest, manly way. Is not this the best way to do Christian work?—W. P. Lockhart.

660. Evading Duty.

Sir William MacGregor, whose unflagging zeal for humanity in many parts of the globe has done so much for the cause of Christianity, once discussed with me the relatively rapid progress of Mohammedanism in West Africa as compared with that of Christianity. "It's just this," he said, "every Mohammedan regards himself as a missionary; the majority of Christians think it is another man's work."—Bishop Frodsham.

661. Successful Endeavour.

The Rev. Edward Judson, of the Berean Baptist Church, New York, prints the following note at the end of a list of the services of his church: "A Christian man, deeply devoted, and wise to win souls, made it a rule to speak to some one unconverted person every day on the subject of his soul's salvation. One night, as he was about retiring to rest, he bethought himself that he had not fulfilled his vow that day. He immediately put on his attire and prepared to go in quest of a soul. But where should he go was the question. He concluded to make a visit to a grocer with whom he was in the habit of trading. He found him engaged in closing up his store. When the errand of his customer was made known he was surprised. He said all sorts of Christians traded with him — Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists, etc.—but no one had ever spoken to him about his soul. The night visit of his customer and his earnest pleadings made such an impression upon his mind that it led to his speedy conversion.—Sword and Trowel.

662. Give What You Have.

Whittier, in one of his most beautiful poems, describes the Abbot of a monastery kneeling at the foot of the altar absorbed in prayer. His devotions are disturbed by a sound outside the walls, which seems like the wail of a lost soul. Looking from the casement, he sees a wretched woman, her white hair flowing in the wind, her face distorted with agony, her wrinkled hands clasped in pathetic appeal, crying for alms. Her first-born son is enslaved to the Moors. She begs for money for his redemption. The Abbot's soul is moved with compassion. "What I can, I give—my prayers," he replies. But the woman implores him not to mock her suffering. It is not prayers, but gold, she craves. Even while she speaks, perhaps her first-born is dying. Then the Abbot tells her that the monks are forever giving, and therefore have nothing. The woman cries: "Give me the silver candlesticks on either side of the great crucifix!" Then the Abbot, acknowledging that God loves mercy more than sacrifice, with trembling hands takes down the silver candlesticks and places them within the beggar's palms.

"And as she vanished down the linden shade,
He bowed his head and for forgiveness prayed.
So the day passed, and when the twilight came,
He woke to find the chapel all aflame,
And, dumb with grateful wonder, to behold
Upon the altar candlesticks of gold."

Jesus asks not only your gold and silver, bearing the superscription of the nation you serve, but the gold and silver of your intelligence, your social position, your intellectual ability, your refined character.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

663. Unknown Workers.

Oberlin, the French philanthropist, was once travelling in the depth of winter amongst the mountains of Alsace. The cold was intense, the snow lay thickly upon the ground, and ere the half of his journey was over he felt himself yielding to fatigue and sleep. He knew if he gave way to sleep he would wake no more; but in spite of this knowledge desire for sleep overcame him, and he lost consciousness. When he came to again a waggoner in a blue blouse was standing over him, urging him to take wine and food. By and by his strength revived, he was able to walk to the wagon, and was soon driven to the nearest village. His rescuer refused money, saying it was his duty to assist one in distress. Oberlin begged to know his name, that he might remember him in his prayers. "I see," replied the waggoner, "you are a preacher. Tell me the name of the Good Samaritan!" "I cannot," answered Oberlin, "for it is not recorded." "Ah, well," said the waggoner, "when you can tell me his name, I will then tell you mine." And so he went away.—The Signal.

664. I'll Send a Hand.

A minister once urged a good farmer in his church to come out and help in the revival meetings; and now, particularly to be at a special appointment. He assented, and as the pastor left, thinking he had gained a point, the farmer shouted, "If I do not come, I'll send a hand." This suits many. Here is a man who has plenty of money and is disposed to take life easy. "I'll give money; but you do the work—I'll send a hand." Here is a woman with plenty of time at her command, and when you urge her to visit the poor and sick, she says, "Oh, I do not exactly like to go myself; I'll subscribe—I'll send a hand." Christian parents lay over on Sunday School teachers the work of praying with and for their children, saying, "It's a trial to me; a cross, but you do it—I'll send a hand." And here is a man of wealth whose son God evidently calls to preach, or to be a missionary, but fatherly pride choosing for that son some lucrative profession, the parent answers, "I cannot give up my son; but I'll give money to educate some other one for the ministry—I'll send a hand." And so the excuse goes on, forgetful of the fact that God never yet delegated one man to do another man's work; but everywhere, and in every way, calls for personal service. —Rev. H. C. Fish.

665. God's Kingdom.

The king of Prussia, while visiting a village in his land, was welcomed by the school-children of the place. After their speaker had made a speech for them he thanked them. Then, taking an orange from his plate, he asked: "To what kingdom does this belong?" "The vegetable kingdom, sire," replied a little girl. The king took a gold coin from his pocket and, holding it up, asked: "And to what kingdom does this belong?" "To the mineral kingdom," said the girl. "And to what kingdom do I belong, then?" asked the king. The little girl coloured deeply, for she did not like to say, "the animal kingdom," as she thought she would, lest his majesty should be offended. Just then it flashed into her mind that "God made man in His own image," and, looking up with a brightening eye, she said, "To God's kingdom, sire." The king was deeply moved. A tear stood in his eye. He placed his hand on the child's head and said, most devoutly, "God grant that I may be accounted worthy of that kingdom!"—Selected.

666. Badge of Humiliation.

The ancient Batavians, Motley tells us, wore a ring of iron about their necks until they had slain an enemy in battle. After this achievement it was broken off, being considered an emblem of sloth. The Christian who has not won a soul for his Lord is burdened with a badge of humiliation, which can not be removed until he has at least made an honest effort to lead a sinner to the Cross.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

667. Something to Do.

The wife of a man who had left the church and joined a fraternal order was asked why he was no longer a church-member. She replied: "Well, sir, they never gave my husband anything to do at the church, but as soon as he joined the lodge they put a helmet on his head and a sword in his hand and made him keeper of the royal and ancient arch, and he is there every night."—H. A. Proctor.

668. Busy or Idle?

It is the devil that meets with us when we are idle. The angels of the Lord appeared to the shepherds while they were keeping watch over their flocks by night. Matthew was called at the receipt of custom.

Peter and Andrew, his brother, were fishing; James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, were mending their nets, when called by the Saviour.

—Wm. Jay.

669. Our Brother's Keeper.

When travellers climb uncertain, dangerous precipices in Switzerland, they frequently go tied together and all fastened to the guide, who steps carefully and climbs most cautiously up and down the dangerous part of the mountain.

A company of tourists climbing one day made rapid progress until suddenly one of them slipped. He pulled down the second, and the third, and so on until it seemed as if all would be dashed to death over the precipice. But the guide knew exactly what to do. With gigantic strength he wielded the peculiar ice-pick that he carried and struck it deep into the ice; and, when the strain came upon him, the rope tightened and all were saved.

We are thus bound together by the cord of influence. One slipping is likely to pull down another, but it is a possible thing for the awful power of the downward tendency to be averted if just one man in a company or one member in a household is planted firmly on the Rock of Ages. Whether we will or no, we are our brother's keepers.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

670. Help One Another.

A traveller, who was crossing the Alps, was overtaken by a snowstorm at the top of a high mountain. The cold became intense. The air was thick with sleet and the piercing wind seemed to penetrate his bones. Still the traveller for a time struggled on. But at last his limbs were benumbed, a heavy drowsiness began to creep over him, his feet almost refused to move, and he lay down on the snow to give way to that fatal sleep which is the last stage of extreme cold, and from which he would certainly never have waked again in this world. Just at that moment he saw another poor traveller coming along the road. The unhappy man seemed to be, if possible, even in a worse condition than himself, for he, too, could scarcely move; all his powers were frozen, and all appeared to be just on the point to die. When he saw this poor man, the traveller, who was just going to lie down to sleep, he made a great effort. He roused himself up, and he crawled, for he was scarcely able to walk, to his dying fellow sufferer. He took his hands into his own and tried to warm them. He chafed his temples; he rubbed his feet; he applied friction to his body. And all the time he spoke cheering words into his ear and tried to comfort him. As he did thus, the dying man began to revive, and he felt able to go forward. But this was not all, for his kind benefactor, too, was recovered by the efforts which he had made to save his friend. The exertion of rubbing made the blood circulate again in his own body. He grew warm by trying to warm the other. His drowsiness went off; he no longer wished to sleep; his limbs returned again to their proper force, and the two travellers went on their way together, happy and congratulating one another on their escape. Soon the snowstorm passed away, the mountain was crossed, and they reached their homes in safety. If you feel your heart cold towards God, and your soul almost ready to perish, try to do something which may help another soul to life and make his heart glad, and you will often find it the best way to warm, and restore, and gladden your own.—S. Martin.

671. Helpful Man.

He never saw the trouble; he only saw the deed.
He never thought of distance; his mind was on the need.
He never reckoned money as a prize worth clinging to;
He said its only value was the good that it could do.

He never stopped to reckon what he'd miss, of joy, to stay
And help a fellow-being who was stranded on the way—
Never paused to think of pleasures that he'd cherished long and planned;
All he saw was one in trouble who must have a helping hand.

There seemed nothing so important that he wouldn't turn aside
For the man who needed friendship and was really trouble-tried;
He wasn't one to answer, "I have something else to do."
He thought his foremost duty was to help a man he knew.

He never saw the trouble; he only saw the deed,
He never thought of sacrifice; his mind was on the need.
And he had this simple motto, which he followed to the end:
"When the other man's in trouble, that's the time to be his friend."

672. Helping Hand.

If you have a friend worth loving,
Love him, yes, and let him know
That you love him, ere life's evening
Tinge his brow with sunset glow.
Why should good words ne'er be said
Of a friend—till he is dead?

If you hear a song that thrills you,
Sung by any child of song,
Praise it. Do not let the singer
Wait deserved praises long.
Why should one who thrills your heart
Lack the joy you may impart?

If you hear a prayer that moves you,
By its humble, pleading tone,
Join it. Do not let the seeker
Bow before his God alone.
Why should not your brother share
The strength of "two or three" in prayer?

If you see the hot tears falling
From a brother's weeping eyes,
Share them. And by kindly sharing
Own your kinship with the skies.
Why should any one be glad
When a brother's heart is sad?

If a silvery laugh goes rippling
Through the sunshine on his face,
Share it. "'Tis the wise man's saying—
"For both grief and joy a place."
There's health and gladness in the mirth
In which an honest laugh has birth.

If your work is made more easy
By a friendly, helping hand,
Say so. Speak out brave and truly,
Ere the darkness veil the land.
Should a brother workman dear
Falter for a word of cheer?

Scatter thus your seeds of kindness,
All enriching as you go—
Leave them. Trust the Harvest Giver,
He will make each seed to grow.
So until its happy end,
Your life shall never lack a friend.
—The Presbyterian.

PRAISE.

673. An Optimistic Monk.

The monk, Basle, according to a quaint old legend, died while under the ban of excommunication by the pope, and was sent in charge of an angel to find his proper place in the nether world. But his genial disposition and his great conversational powers won friends wherever he went. The fallen angels adopted his manner, and even the good angels went a long way to see him and live with him. He was removed to the lowest depths of Hades, but with the same result. His inborn politeness and kindness of heart were irresistible, and he seemed to change the hell into a heaven. At length the angel returned with the monk, saying that no place could be found in which to punish him. He still remained the same Basle. So his sentence was revoked, and he was sent to Heaven and canonized as a saint.—Orison Swett Marden.

674. Rejoice in the Lord.

When I was in Canada some time ago I spent a few days in the Rocky Mountains, and, in company with friends, I tramped miles and miles through the forests and among those glorious hills. The leaves were just beginning to turn, and their yellow and scarlet colors made up a scene I shall never forget. But I will tell you one thing I noticed about those vast Canadian forests. They were songless. I missed the blackbird and the thrush and the other songsters that make our English woods so full of melody. With the exception of the chattering of the squirrels, those great forests of the Rockies in October were silent. And I have thought many a time that the religion of very many of us is like those Canadian forests—it is songless and joyless. There is no gladness, no sunshine, no triumph about it. People might be excused for thinking that our religion is sad and doleful and gloomy. And do you not think that may in some measure account for our impotence? People are not drawn to us because we lack "joy." They crowded to Jesus Christ. Little children, sick folk, publicans and sinners, they all crowded to Jesus, so that there was no room, not even about the door—He was so full of hope and brightness and sunshine. They would crowd to us, too, if only we were like Him. In the interests of our work there is nothing we need more than to be able to enter into the "joy of our Lord."—J. D. Jones.

675. Ring the Bells.

Massena, one of Napoleon's generals, suddenly appeared, with eighteen thousand men, before an Austrian town which had no means of defense. The town council had nearly decided to surrender when the old dean of the church reminded them that it was Easter, and begged them to hold services as usual and to leave the trouble in God's hands. This they did; and the French, hearing the church bells ringing joyfully, concluded that an Austrian army had come to relieve the place and quickly broke camp. Before the bells ceased ringing, all the Frenchmen had vanished.

The incident has often been duplicated in individual lives. They have rung the joy bells in the face of pain and sickness and poverty and fear and loneliness and all other trials. Then the joy bells have conquered. Speedily the foe has slunk away. Speedily the bell-ringers have found themselves in possession of the field. For no enemy is quite so strong as faith companioned with good cheer.—Amos R. Wells.

676. God the Source of Gifts.

In 1808 a grand performance of the "Creation" took place at Vienna. Haydn himself was there, but so old and feeble that he had to be wheeled into the theatre in a chair. His presence roused intense enthusiasm among the audience, which could no longer be suppressed as the chorus and the orchestra burst in full power upon the passages, "And there was light." Amid the tumult of the enraptured audience the old composer was seen striving to raise himself. Once on his feet, he mustered up all his strength, and, in reply to the applause of the audience, he cried out as loudly as he was able, "No, no! not from me, but," pointing to heaven, "from thence—from heaven above—comes all!" saying which he fell back in his chair, faint and exhausted, and had to be carried out of the room. —C. F. Deems, D.D.

677. Giving God the Glory.

I was reading of the battle of Agincourt, in which Henry V. figured; and, it is said, after the battle was won—and gloriously won—the king wanted to acknowledge the Divine interposition, and he ordered the chaplain to read the psalm of David, and when he came to the words, "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy name be the praise," the king dismounted, and all the cavalry dismounted, and all the great host of officers and men threw themselves on their faces. Oh, at the story of the Saviour's love and the Saviour's deliverance, shall we not prostrate ourselves before Him to-night, hosts of earth and hosts of heaven, falling upon our faces and crying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory?"—T. De Witt Talmage.

678. Time to Shout.

Billy Bray, the Cornish preacher, was a constant visitor among the sick and dying. On one occasion he was sitting by the bedside of a Christian brother who had been always very reticent and afraid to confess joyously his faith in Christ. Now, however, he was filled with gladness. Turning to Billy, whose beaming face and sunny words had done so much to produce this joy, he said, "Oh, Mr. Bray, I'm so happy that, if I had the power, I'd shout 'Glory!'" "Hae, mon," said Billy, "what a pity it was thee didn't shout 'Glory!' when thee hadst the power!"

679. Mirrors.

A little street girl was taken sick one Christmas and carried to the hospital. While there she heard the story of Jesus' coming into the world to save us. One day the nurse came around at the usual hour, and "Little Broomstick" (that was her street name) held her by the hand and whispered, "I am having real good times here, ever such good times. S'pose I'll have to go 'way from here just as soon as I get well; but I'll take the good time along—some of it, anyhow. Did you know about Jesus' being born?"

"Yes," replied the nurse, "I know. But you must not talk any more."

"You did? I thought you looked as if you didn't, and I was going to tell you."

"Why, how did I look?" asked

the nurse, forgetting her orders in her curiosity.

"Oh, just like most o' folks—kind o' glum. I shouldn't think you'd ever look glum if you knowed about Jesus' being born."—Christian Evangelist.

680. Joy of Salvation.

At the Southport Convention, 1901, the Rev. W. Y. Fullerton told an amusing incident of a friend of his, not a Methodist, but with enough fire for two, who wrote a post-card to a friend, and, having filled up the back, wrote a closing message on the front of the card, "Be of good cheer, brother." And the Post-Office authorities not only surcharged the recipient, but stamped the message, "Contrary to regulations." Christian joy is legitimate, and not opposed to the regulations of heaven.—Methodist Times.

681. Joy Over Returning Sinners.

I saw in Amsterdam the diamond cutting, and I noticed great wheels, a large factory and powerful engines, and all the power was made to bear upon a small stone no larger than the nail of my little finger. All that huge machinery for that little stone, because it was so precious! Methinks I see you poor insignificant sinners, who have rebelled against your God, brought back to your Father's house, and now the whole universe is full of wheels, and all those wheels are working together for your good, to make out of you a jewel fit to glisten in the Redeemer's crown. God is not represented as saying more of creation than that "it was very good," but in the work of grace He is described as singing for joy. He breaks the eternal silence and cries, "My son is found." As the philosopher, when he had compelled nature to yield her secret, ran through the street, crying, "Eureka! Eureka! I have found it! I have found it!" so does the Father dwell on the word, "My son that was dead, is alive again, he that was lost is found."—C. H. Spurgeon.

682. A Singing Pilgrim.

Mr. Robson, of Shields, once had to go down into a coal mine to consult a miner about some evidence wanted at once. When he got to the bottom of the shaft, he asked the man in charge how he could find his client. "Oh," he replied, "you will have no difficulty in finding him. He is one of your blessed Methodists and is sure to be singing." As Robson went along the dreary drift of the mine, he said to himself, "surely, if a man be singing here, it must be 'Plunged in a gulf of dark despair we wretched sinners lay!'" But he had not gone very far when he heard a cheery voice singing:

"I've reached the land of corn and
wine,
And all its riches freely mine,
Here shines undimmed one perfect
day,
And all my night has passed away."

That is what the grace of God can do. It can turn night into day and sorrow into song.—J. H. Jowett.

683. Cheerfulness.

Cheerfulness is a duty we owe to others. There is an old tradition that a cup of gold is to be found wherever a rainbow touches the earth, and there are some people whose smiles, the sounds of whose voices, whose very presence seem like rays of sunshine, to turn everything they touch into gold. Men never break down as long as they can keep cheerful. "A merry heart is a continual feast to others besides itself." The shadow of Florence Nightingale cured more than her medicines; and if we share the burdens of others, we lighten our own.—Sir John Lubbock.

684. Sad and Glad Testimony.

Suppose some friend, having heard that a legacy was left you, should come to you with a solemn countenance and a tongue like a funeral bell, saying, "Do you know SO-and-SO has left you $50,000?" Why, you would say, "Ah! I dare say," and laugh in his face. But if your brother should suddenly burst into your room and exclaim, "I say, what do you think? You are a rich man; SO-and-SO has left you $50,000." Why, you would say, "I think it is very likely to be true, for you look so happy over it."—C. H. Spurgeon.

685. Song of Deliverance.

There is a beautiful tale concerning Richard Cœur De Lion, who in one of his famous adventures during the Crusades was taken prisoner and confined within the gloomy walls of an Eastern dungeon. There was in Richard's court in England a favorite minstrel, who was wont to beguile his master's weariness with song. There was one that always cheered the king; and the faithful singer went singing this song outside the walls of many foreign prisons and fortresses, until at last one day he heard it echoed from within a dungeon and knew the voice, and cried out in ecstasy, "O Richard! O my king!" That song had floated around many prisons and had been heard within by many other prisoners, but it meant no more to them than a beautiful song by an idle wanderer; but to Richard it meant deliverance and happiness and home. So Christ may be conceived as stepping with stately tread through the world, passing the prison houses and dungeons of the earth and saying with great tenderness, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." To some who hear His words His song is but that of a poor wayfarer, but to those who know the life of God, it is joy unspeakable and full of glory.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

686. Be of Good Cheer.

When the news of Senator Hayne's famous speech in favor of nullification reached the North, a hardy patriot of New England was so depressed by the oration, which he believed unanswerable, though false in its spirit and teaching, that he was made ill and finally threw himself upon his bed in an agony of despair. A few days later his daughter brought to him a paper containing Webster's immortal reply to Hayne. At first he refused to read it or to listen to it, but his daughter sat beside him and began to read. As she proceeded, the man's attention was arrested. At length he straightened himself up in bed and, as he became more deeply aroused, broke forth into exclamations of admiration. Finally, as she concluded the reading, he shouted: "Bring me my boots, I am well again!"

In the midst of life's trials the Christian sometimes becomes utterly depressed. It seems to him that no ray of hope falls across his pathway, and that the world steadily deteriorates in moral value. He can look for no triumph of righteousness. Then faith turns his gaze upon the figure of Jesus the Christ, and his spiritual imagination enables him to hear the Master's words, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And remembering the glorious triumph of his Lord, he takes courage again and faces the world with renewed bravery, to gain for himself the victory which overcometh the world.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

687. "Home, Sweet Home."

On the tenth of April, in 1852, beneath the African sun, died an American. He was laid to rest in a lonely cemetery in Tunis, Africa. Thirty-one years later, as an act of a grateful public, the United States dispatched a man-of-war to the African coast, American hands opened that grave, placed the dust of his body on board the battleship, and turned again for his native land. Their arrival in the American harbor was welcomed by the firing of guns in the fort and by a display of flags at half-mast. His remains were carried to the nation's Capital City on a special train. There was a suspension of all business, an adjournment of all departments of government, and, as the funeral procession passed down Pennsylvania Avenue, the president, vice-president, members of the cabinet, congressmen, judges of the supreme court, officers of the army and navy, and a mass of private citizens, rich and poor, stood with uncovered heads. To whom did they thus pay homage? To a man who expressed the longing of his heart rather than the happy experience of his life; a man whose soul longed for the domestic tranquillity of a pious home, and he expressed that longing in the words of that sweet song, "Home, Sweet Home."—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

688. Send for Him.

In 1831 there was a musical society in Milan which was preparing to bring out Haydn's "Creation," when all of a sudden the maestro in charge took fright at the difficulty of his task and laid down his baton. One Massini, a singing teacher, who was to direct the choral part, said to the committee, "I know but one man here who can help us out of our plight." "Who is he?" said Count Borromeo, the president. "His name is Verdi, and he reads the most puzzling scores at sight," was Massini's answer. "Well," said the Count, "send for him." Massini obeyed, and Verdi soon made his appearance. He was handed the score of "The Creation," and he undertook to direct the performance. Rehearsals commenced, and the final rendering of the oratorio was set down as most creditable to all concerned. From that time Verdi's reputation was assured.—"One Thousand New Illustrations."

PRAYER.

689. Prayer Meeting in Hell.

An aged minister fancied that he had committed the unpardonable sin. At last, after much conflict, he submitted to what he mistakably considered was the will of God, for him to be lost. Then something within him whispered:

"Suppose there is a hell for you, what would you, with your disposition and habits, do there?"

The quick answer was, "I would set up a prayer-meeting," and with the words came the light of God to show him the absurdity of it all. The fact one fears that he has committed this sin is the sure proof he has not.—D. L. Moody.

690. Previous Engagement.

Major-General O. O. Howard was once stationed on the Pacific Coast, and some friends of his wanted to honor him by having a reception. They decided to have it on Wednesday night. It was to be a great affair, and the President had given it his sanction. Then some one said, "We had better let him know, so that he will be ready on Wednesday evening," and so they went and told him, "General, Wednesday night we want to see you on a matter of business." "Well, gentlemen, you cannot see me on that night; I have a previous engagement." Finally they said, "It is a reception, and the President of the United States has given it his sanction." And the old veteran, his eyes flashing, stood up and said: "You know I am a church-member, and I promised the Lord when I united with His church that every Wednesday night I would meet Him in the prayer meeting, and there is nothing in the world that would make me break my engagement." They had the reception, but they had it on a Thursday evening. When I was out there, I asked, "Where is the man who has the greatest influence?" and they said, "It is not a minister of the gospel; it is Major-General Howard." — J. Wilbur Chapman.

691. Praying Members.

Mr. Moody tells us a remarkable incident in connection with an early visit to London. He had gone there for a visit. He was unknown in London, hence he did not expect to preach; but a little while after arriving there he was invited to preach for a certain church, which he did. He said it was a very cold and uninteresting service to him, but he announced that he would preach again that night.

Upon reaching the church, he noticed that the atmosphere had changed, he did not know just why. At the close of the meeting he was led to give an invitation for those who wanted to be saved to stand. A great crowd of people stood. He left the next day for Dublin, Ireland. Shortly after arriving there he received a telegram from the church to return, stating that the whole community was in an upstir and clamor for a series of meetings. He went back and found that a great revival was beginning, and hundreds of people were being converted.

Not long after he learned the secret. An invalid lady, who could not attend the church, was praying for a mighty outpouring of the Spirit upon the church. She prayed for months. Once she saw in the papers accounts of some of the Moody meetings in America, and, although she had never heard of Mr. Moody before, she began to pray that God would send him to her church in London for a revival. One Sunday morning her sister, upon her return from the service, informed her of Moody's presence and his preaching, whereupon she spent the whole afternoon in prayer that God would make that night a night of power. That explains the difference between morning and evening services!

Oh, I tell you what we want in the churches is praying members! Would that we could find even one who would thus resolve to pray to God for salvation and power to come upon the church. This is the need of to-day—importunate prayer, like the Syro-Phœnician woman's "Lord, help! Lord, help!" —L. G. Broughton.

692. Pleading the Promise.

Years ago, when I was preaching for several days in a Southern city, I preached one morning on the text: "But without faith, it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." At the close of the service an elderly woman—I should say she was three score and ten years of age—rose up and said, "Preacher, do you believe what you have preached to-day?" And I replied, "Indeed, I do, for I have proclaimed God's Word, which Word I surely believe." "Very well," she said, "I am so glad that you believe it. I am looking for some one who believes it. You quoted in your sermon, just now, that glorious promise from Jesus: 'If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven'—do you believe that promise, and will you plead it with me?" Before I answered she spoke again: "It is like this: My husband is, and has long been, a captain on the boat that sails the river. He never goes to church and is exceedingly wicked, and now he is growing old. If you will join me in pleading that promise about two agreeing, we will claim him for God and salvation and heaven—will you join me?" And there I stood, thinking, wondering, searching my heart. Did I really believe that promise? Was I willing to plead it then and there, in the case just named? And while I stood thus thinking and hesitating, a plainly dressed man, a blacksmith, rose and said: "Auntie, I will join you in pleading that promise." And there, before us all, he walked over to her and humbly said. "Let us plead it now." They knelt in prayer, and he began to pray. It was as simple as a little child talking to its mother. He reminded the good Saviour of the promise He had made, and insisted that they twain, there kneeling, accepted that promise, claimed it, pleaded it as they asked Him to save the aged, sinful sailor. It was all over in a few moments. The simplicity and the pathos of it were indescribable. The people were dismissed. The day passed and the people gathered for the evening service. The preacher stood up to preach, and there before him came the old lady just described, and with her came a white-haired old man. At the close of the sermon the preacher asked those who desired to be Christians to come to the front pews for counsel and prayer, while the people sang. The old man was on his feet immediately, and was coming toward the front. He was talked with and prayed for that night, but all seemed utter darkness to him. Over there, to the right and the left, sat the aged wife and the middle-aged blacksmith, with faces shining like the morning. They had a secret the rest of us did not have. They had pleaded and were claiming the promise of Jesus, and their hearts knew that all was well. The night service was ended, and the people went their ways. The old man shambled out into the darkness of the night, his soul darker even than the night. The next morning came, and the people were gathering for the service. The preacher was alone in the study, behind the pulpit, trying to make ready for the service. There was a knock on the outer door of the study. The door was opened, and there stood the old man. And thus he began: "Sir, I can't wait for your sermon this morning. Tell me now, if you know, how I can be saved." And there in that study, before the service, he accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and at the morning service, an hour later, gave a testimony for Christ, the sweetness and glory of which will outlast the stars. What is there remarkable about this? Nothing at all, when you remember that two friends of Jesus, honestly and actually pleaded and claimed the promise of Jesus.—George W. Truett, D.D.

693. Petition Rejected.

The *London Times* some years ago told the story of a petition that was being circulated for signatures. It was a time of great excitement, and this petition was intended to have great influence in the House of Lords; but there was one word left out. Instead of reading, "We humbly beseech thee," it read, "We beseech thee." So it was ruled out. My friends, if we want to make an appeal to the God in Heaven, we must humble ourselves; and if we do humble ourselves before the Lord, we shall not be disappointed. —D. L. Moody.

694. Mother's Prayers.

I cannot tell you how much I owe to the solemn words of my good mother. It was the custom on Sunday evenings, while we were yet little children, for her to stay at home with us; and then we sat round the table and read verse after verse, and she explained the Scriptures to us. After that was done, then came the time of pleading; there was a little piece of Alleyn's Alarm, or of Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, and this was read with pointed observations made to each of us as we sat round the table; and the question was asked how long it would be before we would think about our state, how long before we would seek the Lord. Then came a mother's prayer, and some of the words of a mother's prayer we shall never forget, even when our hair is grey. —C. H. Spurgeon.

695. Expectant Prayers.

A beautiful little book, "Expectation Corners," tells us of a King who prepared a city for some of his poor subjects. Not far from them were large storehouses, where everything they could need was supplied if they but sent in their requests. But on one condition—they should be on the outlook for the answer, so that when the king's messengers came with the answers to their petitions, they should always be found waiting and ready to receive them. The sad story is told of one desponding one who never expected to get what he asked, because he was too unworthy. One day he was taken to the king's storehouses, and there, to his amazement, he saw, with his address on them, all the packages that had been made up for him, and sent. There was the garment of praise, and the oil of joy, and the eye-salve, and so much more; they had been to his door, but found it closed; he was not on the outlook. From that time on he learned the lesson Micah would teach us: "I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me."—Andrew Murray.

696. Cowboy's Prayer.

O Lord, I've never lived where churches grow;
I love creation better as it stood
The day you finished it so long ago,
And looked upon your work and called it good.

I know that others find you in the light
That sifted down through tinted window panes,
And yet I seem to feel you near to-night
In this dim starlight on the plains.

I thank you, Lord, that I am placed so well;
That you have made my freedom so complete;
That I'm no slave of whistle, clock or bell,
Or weak-eyed prisoner of wall and street.
Let me be easy on the man that's down,
And make me square and generous with all.
I'm careless sometimes, Lord, when I'm in town,
But never let them say I'm mean or small.

Forgive me, Lord, when something I forget;
You understand the reasons that are hid.
You know about the things that gall and fret;
You know me better than my mother did.
Just keep an eye on all that's done and said,
Just right me sometimes when I turn aside,
And guide me on the long, dim trail ahead
That stretches upward toward the Great Divide.
—Charles B. Clark, Jr.

PROCRASTINATION.

697. An Unanswerable Question.

Many years ago a Welsh minister, a man of God, beginning his sermon, leaned over the pulpit and said with a solemn air: "Friends, I have a question to ask. I cannot answer it. You cannot answer it. If an angel from heaven were here, he could not answer it. If a devil from hell were here, he could not answer it." Death-like silence reigned. Every eye was fixed on the speaker. He proceeded: "The question is this, How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"—C. H. Spurgeon.

698. Danger of Indifference.

A family perished, not long ago, by a fire in their own house. They were not consumed by the flames, but suffocated by the smoke. No blaze was visible at all, nor could any alarming sign of fire be discovered from the street, and yet death came as effectually upon them as if they had been burned to ashes. Thus is sin fatal in its consequences, few being destroyed by outrageous forms of it, flaming up with lurid glare, but multitudes perishing by the stifling smoke of indifference and spiritual slumber.—J. N. Norton, D.D.

699. Tragic Delay.

May I tell you the saddest memory out of my young manhood? It comes to me on the wings of recollection. It has come to me a thousand times. I had just found Christ, as I was turning into young manhood. I knew very little about Him. About all that I knew was that I had decided for Him. I did not know how to talk to anybody else. The earnest, faithful preacher, genuine to the depths of his heart, sincere as the sunlight, true as truth itself, as every preacher ought to be, spoke to the boys in the school, and groups of them made their decision for Christ. Next to the last night of the meeting had come. I sat beside my desk-mate. He had not yet decided for Christ. I could no longer be silent, so I bent over beside Jim and said: "Jim, you go, All is at stake, Jim. You make your surrender. I don't know how to talk to you, Jim, only I would have you go." He looked earnestly into my face and said: "Let me off to-night, George, and if you will let me off to-night, I will promise you that, if I feel like this to-morrow night, I will certainly go. Let me off for to-night." I said: "Jim, your issue is not with me, nor is your issue with that preacher who is preaching. Your issue is with Christ, who died for you. He has spoken to you. He has made you serious. He calls you. Make your surrender to Him, and make it now, while you can." He put his face down in his hands and was moved with deepest emotion, and I bent over him again and made a second effort. I said: "Jim, if you will make your surrender to Christ, and go down the aisle to that minister, I will walk with you. I will take your arm, if you like, or you can take mine. Won't you do it to-night?" And then resolutely he summoned himself and looked into my face, with purpose in his eye and in his words, and said: "Not to-night. If I feel like this to-morrow night, I will go, but I will not go to-night."

Oh, I wish I could leave the rest untold, but the story would not be done. When the next night came he was not there. The next day in school he was not there. We asked about him, but nobody seemed to know where he was. And then the meeting ended, and the second day came, and the school, but he was not there. Nobody knew why. And the third day, and nobody knew why, and the fourth day; and I said: "I will go by his home to find out why." The mother met me at the door and said: "Why, didn't you know? He came home from the meeting the other night, and before the night was gone he was stricken with dreadful pneumonia. Oh, he is sick, sir; too sick to see you. He cannot see anybody but the doctor and the nurse and his mother and father." I went around the fifth day, and he was worse. I went around the sixth day, and the mother's eyes were red from weeping, and she said: "We have little hope, sir." I went around the seventh day, and I said: "Let me stay. Maybe I have not done my duty. I have been a Christian only a few weeks myself. Maybe I have not done my duty. Let me stay with him. Maybe he will know me. Let me be near him. Maybe he will be conscious and know me." She let me stay, and the doctors stayed, and the nurse stayed, and the parents stayed, and I stayed. Oh, that long-drawn-out and never-to-be-forgotten night! Midnight came, and he stirred uneasily there in his bed, and pulled nervously at the coverings that wrapped his bed. Then he began to talk, and we all bent our ears to catch what he said. With his hoarse whispers, and staring wildly, this is what he said:

"Not to-night, George! Let me off to-night. I promise if you will let me off to-night I will settle this to-morrow night. I will settle it to-morrow night, if you will let me off to-night, but not to-night. I am not going to-night. I am not going to-night, and you needn't talk further. I will settle it to-morrow night, if I feel like this, but I am not going to-night." In another hour or two the spirit took its flight. Oh, the tragedy, the tragedy, of a man's dying like that! My brother men, I tell you, men ought not to die like that.—George W. Truett, D.D.

700. Peril of Delay.

Yonder, to the great Northwest, a young civil engineer went to construct a bridge across a mountain chasm, and after weeks and months, with his groups of helpers, he had almost finished the bridge at the close of a certain day. He said to his men: "Come back, men, after supper, and we will finish it in about an hour, and I will pay you a day's wages for the extra hour." "No," they said, "we have made other arrangements." He said, "Come back, and I will give you two days' wages." They said, "No; but why do you urge it," He said: "If a great storm should come down to-night on the mountains, it would sweep this unfinished bridge away. We have not quite secured the bridge." But they went their way, saying: "It won't rain in months." But the clouds were filled with rain that very night and emptied their floods upon the mountains, and the floods came down, resistless in their power, and swept the unfinished bridge utterly away. Oh, men and women, that is a parable and picture of the soul that knows and wishes, and yet presumes and delays and waits.—George W. Truett, D.D.

701. Defrauding God.

There was once a horse that ran away in the morning and did not return till the evening. When the master upbraided him the horse replied, "But here am I returned safe and sound. You have your horse." "True," answered the master, "but my field is unploughed." If a man turns to God in old age, God has the man, but He has been defrauded of the man's work. And the man himself has been defrauded worst of all.—Sunday School Chronicle.

702. Lethargy of Soul.

Two of my hearers perished by a fire in their own house. They were not consumed by the flames, but they were suffocated by the smoke. No blaze was ever visible, nor could any remarkable sign of fire be seen from the street, yet they died as readily as if they had been burned to ashes by raging flames. In this way sin also is deadly. Comparatively few of our hearers are destroyed by outrageous and flaming vices, such as blasphemy, theft, drunkenness, or uncleanness, but crowds of them are perishing by that deadly smoke of indifference which casts its stifling clouds of carelessness around them and sends them asleep into everlasting destruction. O that they could be saved from the smoke as well as from the flame!—C. H. Spurgeon.

703. Bad Advice.

The story is told of a revival sweeping through the university at Princeton, New Jersey. Aaron Burr came to the president of the university and said: "Mr. President, I have made up my mind to consider the claims of Christ. Now, Mr. President, what would you do?" And the old president of the university gave him this advice: He said, "Burr, if I were you, I would wait until the excitement of the revival had subsided, and then I would think it out carefully." Aaron Burr bowed his head a moment, and then he said, "Mr. President, that is exactly what I will do." And, it is stated as a fact, that never again in his life did he express a desire to be a Christian, and they say he died without such an expression.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

704. Behind Time.

A railroad train was running at almost lightning speed. A curve was just ahead; and the train was late, very late; still the conductor hoped to pass the curve in safety. Suddenly a locomotive dashed in sight. In an instant there was a collision. A shriek, a shock, and fifty persons killed; and all because an engineer had been behind time.

The battle of Waterloo was being fought. Column after column had been precipitated upon the enemy; the sun was sinking in the west, reinforcements for the enemy were already in sight; it was necessary to carry the position with one final charge. A powerful corps had been summoned from across the country. The great conqueror, confident of its arrival, formed his reserve into an attacking column and gave the word to advance. The whole world knows the result. Napoleon died in exile, a prisoner at St. Helena, because one of his marshals was behind time.

It is continually so in life. The best-laid plans are daily sacrificed because they are "behind time." There are others who put off reformation, year after year, till death seizes them, and they perish unrepentant, because forever "behind time."—Rev. C. Perrin.

705. Meant to Surrender.

McIan of Glencoe meant to surrender, no doubt about it, when in 1691 William the Third gave the word that all royalists must take the oath or take the consequences. McIan meant to surrender, to go to the place where all the Highland chieftains were to go, and take the oath of allegiance, but he said, "I will be the last. I will go at just the last moment. The others have gone ahead, the others have been at Inverness weeks ago, to take the oath," and he started a few days before the thirty-first of the last month, really meaning to take the oath: but a snow-storm came on and detained him, struggling and stumbling through the snows.

McIan arrived three days behind the time fixed, and the king's messenger had gone. There was the tramp of the government army northward to Glencoe, and in the morning the valley that had been so peaceful the night before ran red with blood. Too late! You mean to be saved. Do you know, hell is full of those who meant to be saved, meant to give themselves to Christ, meant to do it, yet are lost? Oh, see to it that you get Christ while there is opportunity given! Oh, close with Him! Why risk eternity?—John Robertson.

706. Impassable Gulf.

There is in a forest in Germany a place they call the "deer-leap," two crags about eighteen yards apart, between them a fearful chasm. This is called the "deer-leap," because once a hunter was on the track of a deer; it came to one of these crags; there was no escape for it from the pursuit of the hunter, and in utter despair it gathered itself up, and in the death agony attempted to jump across. Of course, it fell, and was dashed on the rocks far beneath. Here is a path to heaven. It is plain, it is safe. Jesus marks it out for every man to walk in. But here is a man who says, "I won't walk in that path; I will take my own way." He comes on until he confronts the chasm that divides his soul from heaven. Now his last hour has come, and he resolves that he will leap that chasm, from the heights of earth to the heights or heaven. Stand back, now, and give him full swing, for no soul ever did that successfully. Let him try. Jump! Jump! He misses the mark, and he goes down, depth below depth, "destroyed without remedy." Men! Angels! Devils! what shall we call that place of awful catastrophe? Let it be known forever as "the sinner's death-leap."—T. De Witt Talmage, D.D.

707. Unpreparedness for Death.

"One should think," said a friend to the celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson, "that sickness and the view of death would make men more religious." "Sir," replied Johnson, "they do not know how to go to work about it. A man who has never had religion before no more grows religious when he is sick than a man who has never learned figures can count when he has need of calculation."—Rev. Phil. Baird, D.D.

708. Undecided.

Remember that power of will is a matter of habit, and that he who tampers with his will at last destroys it. Can you tell me who are the most helpless wrecks that toss on the broken waters of society? They are men without power of will. One such man came to my house only the other day. He was a man of brilliant promise, who began life side by side with me. When he came to me, he was a tramp, and had the tramp's squalor and the tramp's limp. He had slept for weeks in low lodging-houses. It was useless to help him; he had destroyed his power of will. His nature was like a rotten wall in which no nail would hold. I could weep over him, I could keep him from starvation, but I could not rouse in him the power of will to save himself. There are thousands such—brilliant wrecks of whom much was expected, but from whom nothing came, of whom their friends said twenty years ago, "He will be a great man," and fifteen years ago, "He has a good deal in him," and ten years ago, somewhat more doubtfully, "He may succeed yet," but of whom now they never speak at all, because they know that he in whom they hoped is a tragic failure, and the failure has been indecision. For God's safe, be decided, even though it be in sin, for there is more hope in that than in a life frittered in vain compromise between God and Baal, in futile drifting between right and wrong.—W. J. Dawson.

709. "Too Muchee By and By."

"What is your complaint against this young man, John?" said the magistrate to the Chinese laundryman, who had summoned a young gentleman whose laundry bill was in arrears.

"He too muchee by and by," was the answer of the aggrieved Celestial, who evidently knew what ailed the young man, even if he could not express his views in the most classical English.

There are other people who are troubled with the same complaint. People are likely to sing themselves into perdition with "the sweet by and by." What they need is the sweet now, which is the accepted time and the day of salvation.—Little Christian.

710. Procrastination.

The steamship *Central America,* on a voyage from New York to

San Francisco, sprung a leak in mid-ocean. A vessel, seeing her signal of distress, bore down toward her. Perceiving the danger to be imminent, the captain of the rescue ship spoke to the *Central America,* asking, "What is amiss?"

"We are in bad repair, and going down; lie by till morning," was the answer.

"Let me take your passengers on board now."

But, as it was night, the commander of the *Central America* did not like to send his passengers away lest some might be lost, and, thinking that they could keep afloat awhile longer, replied: "Lie by till morning."

Once again the captain of the rescue ship called: "You had better let me take them now."

"Lie by till morning," was sounded back through the trumpet.

About an hour and a half later her lights were missed, and, though no sound was heard, the *Central America* had gone down, and all on board perished, because it was thought they could be saved better at another time.—Pulpit Treasury.

711. Fatal Procrastination.

In the cathedral at Genoa there is an emerald vase which is said to have been one of the gifts of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. Its authentic history goes back eight hundred years. The tradition is that when King Solomon received it he filled it with an elixir which he alone knew how to distil, and of which a single drop would prolong human life to an indefinite extent. A miserable criminal, dying of a slow disease in prison, besought the king to give him a drop of this magic potion. Solomon refused, "Why should I prolong so useless a life?" he said. "I will give it to those whose lives will bless their fellow-men." But when good men begged for it the king was in an ill-humor, or too indolent to open the vase, or he promised and forgot. So the years passed until he grew old, and many of his friends whom he loved were dead; and still the vase had never been opened. Then the king, to excuse himself, threw doubt upon the virtues of the elixir. At last he himself fell ill. Then his servants brought the vase that he might save his own life. He opened it. But it was empty. The elixir had evaporated to the last drop. Have we not all within us a vessel more precious than any emerald, into which God has put a portion of the water of life? It is for our own healing—for the healing of others. We hide it, we do not use it—for false shame, or idleness, or forgetfulness. Presently we begin to doubt its efficacy. When death approaches, we turn to it in desperate haste. But the neglected faith has left the soul. The vase is empty.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

712. Fatal Fetters.

Professor Drummond tells of an overladen coal barge which stood in the river: "A sailor reported to the captain that the water was gaining upon the vessel. The captain drove him away with scoffs. Twice, thrice, the warning was repeated. Each time the warning voice was unheeded. At last the barge began to give evidence of sinking. The captain ordered the men to the boats. They took their places. He then said: "I told you there was plenty of time." Then he took out his knife to cut the cable which bound the boat to the barge. He fell back with a cry of horror. The cable was an iron chain!" The eleventh hour is an hour of haste and danger and disappointment. The thread becomes a cord, the cord a cable, the cable a chain. The time to get clear of a sinking craft is now.—W. M. Punshon, D.D.

713. Folly of Procrastination.

It is recorded of Archias, a chief magistrate, in one of the Grecian states, that he was unpopular in his government, and excited the hatred of many of the people, who conspired against his life. The day was arrived when a fatal plot was to be executed. Archias was more than half dissolved in wine and pleasure, when a courier from Athens arrived in great haste with a packet, which contained, as it afterwards appeared, a circumstantial account of the whole conspiracy. The messenger being admitted into the presence of the prince, said: "My Lord, the person who writes you these letters conjures you to read them immediately; they contain serious affairs." Archias replied, laughing: "Serious affairs to-morrow"; and so continued his revel. On the same night, in the midst of that noisy "mirth, the end of which is heaviness," the assailants rushed into the palace and murdered Archias, with his associates; leaving to the world a striking example of the evil of procrastination. In ten thousand affecting instances, something like this has been the conduct and the fate of men respecting the concerns of eternity. They have been warned, but, like the unhappy prince whose case we have recited, they have said: "Serious things to-morrow," and when in an unexpected hour their souls have been "required," they have left the world exclaiming: "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof!"—S. Lowell.

714. Warning Disregarded.

A gentleman was travelling in Italy in the summer months. As he left Rome he was warned of the danger of sleeping at Baccano. He was told to travel all night rather than stop at that place, as a malignant fever prevailed there. He arrived there about bed-time. The air was balmy and the accommodation inviting. He concluded to stop for the night. Those whose interests would be promoted by his doing so told him there was no danger. He rose in the morning and proceeded on his journey. Some days after he had reached Florence the fever developed itself, and he was soon in his grave. Sinners are warned of the consequences of sinful acts. They are persuaded to disregard the warning. They sin, and the threatened consequences do not immediately appear. They think they shall escape; but ere long God's immutable law overtakes them, and they perish. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Rev. Harry Rogers, D.D.

715. Neglect.

I recall the great fire that occurred some years ago in Minneapolis when one of the great newspaper buildings was wrapped in flames. The man in charge (I think) of the Associated Press dispatches sat in the ninth story, and sent out a message all over America, "The building is burning. The fire is in the sixth story and I am in the ninth." Then a little later he sent out a second message: "The fire is in the seventh story and I am in the ninth." Then he sent a third message: "The fire is in the eighth story and I am in the ninth." And when he could hear the crackling of the flames near to him he started to escape. Other men in the building had escaped. They had made their way quickly down the ladders and fire escapes while there was time. When this man came to the fire escapes they were too hot to hold. When he went to the stairway, the fire blocked him. He made his way to the window; he stood for a moment on the window casing, then leaped out to lay hold of a guy rope, and missed his footing. The rest of the story I need not tell you. With the abundant provision for his safety that man was lost. Why? Neglect! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"—J. Wilbur Chapman.

716. Started Too Late.

How many more days do you want to spend in rebellion against God? I am reminded of that little boy who ran to the train. Just as he reached the platform the train moved off and left him. He stood there panting and watching the train, now in the distance. A man said to him: "You didn't run fast enough!" "No," said the boy, "I ran with all my might, but I didn't make it because I didn't start soon enough." Many a man will rush up and find the gates of heaven closed, and say, like the boy, "I didn't start soon enough."—Sam Jones.

717. "While Ye Have Light."

I once heard Gipsy Smith tell a very solemn and impressive story. When he was in America he conducted a mission in Denver. The Sheriff of the town sat on the platform at one of the services, and a young man in the audience stood up as a sign that he asked for prayer, but the Gipsy did not see him. The Sheriff clutched the missioner by the coat and said passionately, "Get that man out while he feels like it." The morning after, the Gipsy called upon the Sheriff, and began talking about the young man. Another man was in the office at the time, and the Gipsy noticed them exchanging significant glances. At last the Sheriff said: "You talk to me as if I were a Christian man, but I am not." "I certainly imagined you to be a Christian," said the Gipsy, "judging by the earnest manner in which you called my attention to the young man last night. Why did you do it if you are not a Christian?" The Sheriff answered: "When I was a boy, I went with my father to a revival meeting in our town. With others, I was making my way to the Communion rail at the close of the service, when I was stopped by my father, who was a good Christian man. He said: 'When we get home I will talk to you about it.' When we got home he spoke to me, and prayed with me, but somehow I did not feel like it then, and I did not get religion, and I have not got it yet. It is my firm conviction that if I had been let go to the Communion rail that night I should have found Christ as my Saviour, and that God intended me to enter the ministry." "While ye have the light, believe in the light." "Walk while ye have the light, lest the darkness come upon you."—Rev. John Reed.

718. Sinning Against the Light.

A few weeks ago a poor woman came to my surgery and said: "A young woman is lodging in the same house with me, who is wretchedly poor, in great suffering, and, I fear, near her end." I accompanied the woman home. She led me to the bedside of the dying girl, and left us together. It was a dreadful scene. A girl of three or four and twenty lay on a wretched pallet, with scarcely any covering. A single chair and a broken table was all the furniture the room contained. Near the bed was hanging, on a few pegs, the girl's finery. Yes, alas! finery. Dresses of gaudy material, and showily made up, were flaunting their gay colours in this chamber of death, looking in that girl's eyes as she lay dying, as witnesses of her sin and folly, and reminding her that, as soon as she was dead, these things, which had cost her so dear, would become the property of the landlady, as payment of the debt she had not money to discharge. I leaned over the bedside, and took her hand in mine. I told her that Jesus had sent me to her with an offer of peace and pardon. "No," she said, hoarsely—"no, I was brought up in a Sunday School; I knew the right, but I did it not. There is no pardon for me now." I knelt down, I prayed for her—prayed, as she had not confidence to pray for herself—her sinful self. I besought Him that she might repent and find peace. But, even as I talked with her, she died, uttering the fearful cry, "Too late! Too late!"—Dr. Raynor.

719. Decide—No Time to Lose.

Some time ago a ship went down, having struck a hidden reef. Fortunately there was time enough to get the passengers and crew into the boats, which safely held off from the foundering vessel. Just before the last boat started, the captain and mate, having seen that all were safe, stood upon the gangway ready to leave the ship. She was fast sinking—no time to be lost. The mate said to the captain, "I have left my purse below; let me go and get it." "Man," replied the other, "you have no time for that; jump at once." "Just a moment, captain—I can easily get it"; and away the mate rushed below. But in that moment the ship went creeping down. I hear the gurgling flood! The captain has barely time to save himself, when, swirling in the awful vortex, the vessel disappears! By and by the body of the mate was found, and in his stiffened hand was tightly grasped the fatal purse. When the purse was opened, what do you think it contained? Eighteen pence! And for that paltry sum he risked and lost his life.—J. Thain Davidson.

720. Hesitate and Be Lost.

I was on Dartmoor some years ago when we were overtaken by a dense mist. My friend, who knew the moor well, said he would bring us straight to the point we wanted, knowing the part of the stream at which we stood and the direction in which we wanted to go. For a while we went on safely enough; then I stopped and turned to button my waterproof. He, too, turned for a moment to speak to me. Then instantly he cried: "I have lost my bearings. That turn did it. I don't know the way any longer." We went on, thinking we were right, but an hour later found ourselves back by the bank of the river we had left. We had gone in a complete circle. "Now," said he, "we can start again; but we must not stop for anything." Away we went, and he led us right across to the point we wanted. Later he explained to me that knowing the direction at the outset he kept his eye on some furze bush or rock straight before him and so led us in a fairly straight line. "If you lose that," said he, "you are sure to go in a circle."—M. G. Pearse.

721. His Answer.

There was an old turnpike man in a quiet country road whose habit was to shut his gate at night and take a nap. One dark, wet night I knocked at his door crying, "Gate! Gate!" "Coming," said the voice of the old man. Then I knocked again, and once more the voice replied, "Coming." This went on for some time, till at length I opened the door and demanded to know why he cried, "Coming," for so long and never came. "Who's there?" said the old man in a sleepy voice. "What d' ye want, sir?" Then, awakening, "Bless yer, sir, and yer pardon; I was asleep. I get so used to hearing them knock that I answer 'Coming' in my sleep, and take no more notice about it." So it is with too many hearers of the Gospel, who hear by habit, and answer God by habit, and at length die with their souls asleep.—Sunday School Chronicle.

722. Unconscious Decay.

In a pastorate of twenty years in one of the oldest churches of this commonwealth three hundred and eighty persons joined the church. The minister made note of certain facts concerning each. Of this three hundred and eighty, three hundred and five joined the church before the age of thirty, thirty-eight between thirty and forty, twenty-two between forty and fifty; eight between fifty and sixty, three between sixty and seventy, three between seventy and eighty, one between eighty and ninety. As the decades pass the numbers rapidly decrease; and as the years pass we know that the intensity of the desire, that the frequency of the coming of the desire to love God lessens. The desire may fade at an early age; it may never depart in a life that rounds the century. But, remember, it may fade any year; remember, it must grow fainter as time passes; remember, it may cease, and cease forever.—G. P. Thwing.

723. No Time for Delay.

A man was once shut up in prison, loaded with chains, and condemned to be hung. He had been taken a prisoner in war by a cruel tyrant, and knew that there was no hope for him if he could not in some way make his escape. In the dead hour of night, when all his guards were sound asleep, and not a footstep was to be heard around his prison, the door of his dungeon was opened, his general entered and took off his chains, and said to him, "Haste, thee, escape from this place. I have at immense expense and terrible exposure of my life entered this prison to save you. Follow me and I will guide you safely. But you have not a moment to lose. An hour's delay may prove forever too late." What will you think when I tell you that the prisoner said, "Let me think about it—wait a little while"; and then actually refused to go with him? Who was to blame for that man's death but himself? This is precisely the way that sinners, condemned and bound by Satan to be shut up in the dark prison of despair, act when Jesus, the great Captain of our salvation, comes to set them free.—Bishop Meade.

724. Danger of Delay.

A lady had a very important lawsuit on hand for which she needed the services of an advocate. She was strongly urged to secure the help of a very eminent and well-known lawyer, but she could not make up her mind to entrust her case to any one. Time passed on, and at last she was compelled to take steps to secure an advocate, and called upon the great lawyer who had been mentioned to her. He listened whilst she expressed her wish to engage his help, but in a few minutes he said with a grave face: "Madam, you are too late; had you come to me before, I would gladly have been your advocate, but now I have been called to the bench, and am a judge, and all I can do is to pass judgment upon your case." Now is the day of grace, and the Lord Jesus Christ is our Advocate, ever pleading the merits of His precious blood, but the day will come when He will be the Judge of sinners, and must pass sentence upon them.—Homilist.

725. "Too Late."

There are no more melancholy words in the language than these. Too late! I have heard them uttered by a brother, as he hurried home to see a dying father, he arrived only to be told that he had breathed his last; and not soon shall I forget the agony they then expressed. Too late! I have known them uttered by a skillful surgeon, when he was summoned to the bedside of a dying man, and I have marked the sadness to which they have given birth. Too late! I have heard them uttered by an anxious crowd, as they stood gazing on a burning building and sadly saw the failure of those who sought to save the inmates from destruction. Too late! I have known them uttered by the noble crew of the life-boat, when, as they put out to the sinking ship, they beheld her go down before their eyes, and "the frightened souls within her." But, oh! none of these circumstances are half so heart-rending as those in which the sinner who has despised his day must find himself when the terrible discovery is made that he is too late to enter heaven. —W. M. Taylor.

726. Pretexts of Indecision.

When duly examined, the pretexts of indecision are absurd; unless we submit to the great appeal, nothing is left but speechlessness. What are the undecided ones waiting for? Some are stopped by a variety of presuppositions. Much mystery and many questions must be cleared up. There are difficulties with regard to the Bible: the great question of Noah's ark, of Baalam's ass, of the Gadarene swine. How shall we reconcile sin, suffering and death with the goodness of God? Are not the birth and death of Christ wrapped in mystery? Now, it is true that revelation presents great problems; but does this justify our hesitation? Spots appear on the sun, yet it gives more light than any other luminary, therefore we rejoice to walk in its light; and although dark places occur in revelation, it is still "the master-light of all our seeing," and our common sense bids us follow its guidance. We have to judge between Christ and other masters, and there need not be one moment's hesitation between the glorious liberty, the godly comfort, the high character, the sweet service, the benign influence, the splendid hope of the Christian life and the life of sin.

Many wait for a more powerful impulse. Waiting for something practically supernatural that will agitate, stimulate or master them; but really the appeal of conscience is not less the voice of God than the vision that smote Saul.

Others wait for a convenient season. "Convenient" is a word that has no place in serious life. When seriously ill, we do not defer sending for the doctor until it is convenient. How much rather, then, shall we promptly deal with the crisis of the soul!—W. L. Watkinson.

727. Fatal Folly.

The path up to the judgment-seat is not a way of preparation; nor at His bar is it a place to prepare for eternity. It is no time to prepare for battle when the enemy is in the camp; no time to make ready to meet a foe when he has broken open your door. There is such a thing as putting off preparation until it is too late. A man may neglect the care of his health until it is too late. A student may suffer the proper time to prepare for a profession to glide away until it is too late. A farmer may neglect to plow and sow until it is too late. A man on a rapid stream near a cataract may neglect to make efforts to reach the shore until it is too late. And so in religion. It is easy to put it off from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age, until it shall be too late. Beyond that interview with God, there is no preparation. Your eternity is not to be made up of a series of successive probations, where, though you fail in one, you may avail yourself of another.—Albert Barnes.

728. "Haven't Got Time."

Opportunity knocked at the door
With a chance for a brother within;
He rapped till his fingers were sore,
And muttered, "Come on, let me in.
Here is something I know you can do,
Here's a hill I know you can climb."
But the brother inside very quickly replied:
"Old fellow, I haven't got time."

Opportunity wandered along
In search of a man who would rise,
He said to the indolent throng:
"Here's a chance for the fellow who tries."
But each of them said with a smile:
"I wish I could do it, but I'm very busy to-day,
Very busy to-day, and I'm sorry to say
That I really haven't got time."

At last Opportunity came
To a man who was burdened with cares,
And said: "I now offer the same Opportunity that has been theirs.
Here's a duty that ought to be done,
It's a chance if you've got time to take it."
Said the man, with a grin, "Come along, pass it in!
I'll either find time or I'll make it."

Of all the excuses there are
By which this old world is accursed,
This "Haven't got time" is by far
The poorest, the feeblest, the worst.
A delusion it is, and a snare;
If the habit is yours you should shake it.
For if you want to do what is offered to you,
You'll find time to do it, or make it.

—Detroit Free Press.

729. To-morrow.

Lord, what am I, that, with unceasing care,
Thou didst seek after me, that Thou didst wait,
Wet with unhealthy dews, before my gate,
And pass the gloomy nights of winter there?
Oh, strange delusion! that I did not greet
Thy blest approach, and oh, to heaven how lost,
If my ingratitude's unkindly frost
Has chilled the bleeding wounds upon Thy feet.
How oft my guardian angel gently cried,
"Soul, from thy casement look, and thou shalt see
How He persists to knock and wait for thee!"
And, oh! how often to that voice of sorrow,
"To-morrow we will open," I replied.
And when the morrow came I answered still,
"To-morrow."

—H. W. Longfellow.

730. Lost Opportunity.

Remember, three things come not back;
The arrow sent upon its track—
It will not swerve, it will not stay
Its speed, it flies to wound or slay;
The spoken word, so soon forgot
By thee, but it has perished not;
In other hearts 'tis living still,
And doing work for good or ill;
And the lost opportunity
That cometh back no more to thee—
In vain thou weepest, in vain dost yearn,
Those three will nevermore return.

—From the Arabic.

731. Too Late.

Late, late, so late! and dark the night, and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
"Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now."

No light had we; for that we do repent;
And, learning this, the Bridegroom will relent.
"Too late, too late; ye cannot enter now."

No light, so late! and dark and chill the night!
O let us in, that we may find the light!
"Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now."

Have we not heard the Bridegroom is so sweet?
O let us in, though late, to kiss His feet!
"No, no; too late! ye cannot enter now."

—Alfred Tennyson.

REGENERATION.

732. New Skipper Aboard.

There was a steamer which plied from London to Plymouth—such a lumbering, awkward craft that every time it entered the dock it injured itself or the dock-gate. But one day it hove in sight, and, while everybody was looking to see what damage would be done, this time it sailed in easily and true. A bystander shouted, "Well, old Bust 'Em Up, what is the matter now?" to which came the reply, "Same old ship, guv'nor, but we have a new skipper aboard."—Fullerton.

733. Inward Cleansing.

"James," said the American planter, "suppose I take an ink-bottle and cork it tight and put a string around the neck, and drag it through the river, how long will it take to clean out the inside?" The negro's face lighted up in a moment, and he replied, "Massa, you'll never get it clean that way in the world." The master seized upon this confession and showed James that baptism by water availed nothing apart from the inward cleansing by the Holy Spirit. —Sunday School Chronicle.

734. No Substitute.

A sculptor may take a piece of rough marble and work from it the figure of a Madonna; but it is still nothing but marble, and lifeless. A carver may take a piece of wood and work out of it a scene of feasting; but it is still wood, and insensible. A watch-cleaner may take a watch, the main-spring of which is broken; he may clean every wheel, cog, pin, hand, face and the cases; but, the main-spring not rectified, it will be as useless for going and time-telling as before. A poor man may clothe himself in the garb of a monarch; but he is still a poor man. A leper may cover all his spots with his garment; but he is still a leper. So the sinner may reform in all the externals of his life so that he shall attain the moral finery of Saul of Tarsus, or Nicodemus, a master in Israel, but, except he be born again from above, he can not see the kingdom of God.—Bate.

735. Inside Information.

A woman was one day discussing with a man the probable meaning of one of the most obscure passages in the works of Robert Browning. The man contended that his interpretation must be correct, since he was on terms of intimacy with the poet and understood his spirit and motive. This the woman was at length willing to admit, but when the man reproached her with the childishness of her faith in the teachings of Christianity, she retorted: "You must remember that I know the Author of the Christian religion, and can therefore understand His teachings as no stranger can." It does not tax one's intelligence, therefore, to accept the statement of Jesus that no man can understand the kingdom of God until by some spiritual transformation he has come into harmony with the inner life of that kingdom. "Ye must be born again," is the most logical thing Jesus could have told Nicodemus, if the ruler of the Jews was sincere in his purpose to ally himself with the kingdom of God.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

736. Blotting Out Sins.

Thank God! He not only separates our sins from us, but He blots them out of His book of remembrance, and remembers them against us no more forever." I never knew the real significance of those words, "I will blot them out of the book of remembrance forever," until I was preaching for Brother James Morris, at the Fifth and Walnut Streets Methodist Church, Louisville, Kentucky. After my sermon, Brother Morris got up and told of the sins of his early years, how he had been a gambler, a drunkard and a sinner in the sight of God. While he was talking, I looked over at his old mother. She was twisting and turning, and it seemed to me that she could not control herself. She seemed to go to pieces like a jointed snake. When he sat down and the service was dismissed, she ran up to him, threw her arms around his neck and said, "Jimmie, what made you say that? What made you say you were a gambler and a drunkard? You know you have always been good." That precious old mother had forgotten that her boy had ever been a sinner; and I said, "Glory to God! Though sunk in the depths of sin, God not only forgives us, but blots our sins out of the book of remembrance forevermore." And now I shall live in glory forever, as if I had never sinned.—Sam Jones.

737. Robed in Christ's Righteousness.

The moment the man believes in Jesus Christ he is in the righteousness of Christ—perfectly righteous; he has put upon him the Saviour's garments. You heard Mr. Weaver say on this platform—I thought it was a good illustration—that one day he met with a very poor man who was in rags. This man being a Christian, he wished to befriend him; he told him if he would go home with him, he would give him a suit of clothes. "So," said Richard, "I went upstairs and took off my second best and put on my Sunday best, for I did not want to give him my best. I sent the man upstairs and told him he would find a suit which he could put on; it was my second best. So, after he had put on the clothes and left his rags behind, he came down and said, "Well, Mr. Weaver, what do you think of me?" "Well," I said, "I think you look very respectable." "Oh, yes, but, Mr. Weaver, it is not I. I am not respectable; it is your clothes that are respectable." "And so," added Mr. Weaver, "so is it with the Lord Jesus Christ; He meets us covered with the rags and filth of sin, and He tells us to go and put on not His second best, but the best robe of His perfect righteousness; and when we come down with that on, we say, "Lord, what dost Thou think of me?" and He says, "Why, thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee." We answer, "No, it is not I, it is Thy righteousness; I am comely because Thou art comely; I am beautiful because Thou art beautiful."—C. H. Spurgeon.

738. God's Jewels.

It is said that some years ago the king of Abyssinia took a British subject, by the name of Campbell, prisoner. They carried him to the fortress of Magdala, and in the heights of the mountains put him in a dungeon, without cause assigned. It took six months for Great Britain to find it out, and then they demanded his instantaneous release. King Theodore refused, and in less than ten days ten thousand British soldiers were on shipboard and sailing down the coast. They disembarked and marched seven hundred miles beneath the burning sun up the mountains to the very dungeon where the prisoner was held; and there they gave battle. The gates were torn down, and presently the prisoner was lifted upon their shoulders and carried down the mountains and placed upon the white-winged ship, which sped him in safety to his home. And it cost the English government twenty-five millions of dollars to release that man.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

739. Quickener of Hidden Life.

Professor Huxley tells us that in the soil of England there lie buried tropical seeds in bewildering variety. They have been brought by birds, by winds, by many agencies. There they lie deeply buried, these tropical potencies, waiting for what? For a tropical atmosphere. Huxley tells us that if for twelve months we could have in this country tropical heat we should be amazed by the coming out of strange seeds, and our little gardens would bloom with tropical luxuriance. Oh, I think that powers we have never conceived lie buried in your life and in mine—powers put there by God and waiting for their proper atmosphere! Our lives are too chill, and so the seeds are non-germinant. But if the heat of heaven could come, I think those powers would troop out of their graves, and we should be amazed to see how rich we were in Christ Jesus, our Lord.—Dr. J. H. Jowett.

740. Pearl of Great Price.

In the first place, we must know the facts about Christ. One of the eminent physicians and surgeons had an only little daughter, whom he and his wife idolized, and, early in life, as most children do have given to them, they furnished a small gold ring for her. That gold ring somehow or other grew a little too small for her, and it chafed and removed some of the skin. As often has been the case, the disease germ found its place, and where that skin had been removed the cancerous germ entered, and before the physician knew what had taken place it had lodged there, and the deadly germ had entered her life.

He was almost insane, and the only thing he and his consulting physicians could agree to do was to sever the finger from her hand, which they did. Only a little time passed by when they discovered down farther on the hand the appearance of the same disease. Then what hours of agony he and his wife suffered! He tells of the torture when they walked into her room and on the coverlet lay that little hand with its covering of remedy which the physician was conscious would never be any real remedy. He said they paused, with tears flowing down their cheeks, to say one to the other, "It is only a few days between us and the casket and the grave. Only a few days between us and sorrow and darkness."

Then some one came to him and told him if he was in his place he would try that new discovery of radium. This physician, in one of the leading magazines only a few months before, had written a long article on the impossibility of radium having any effect on human disease. He had bitterly opposed it in the magazine, but when it was a possibility of recovery for his own child then the magazine article could be thrown into the waste paper basket and removed from any past experience in his life. If anything could be done he was willing to do it in the greatest crisis of his life. He went to Johns Hopkins University and made his investigation. He became convinced that there was something in it. He sold every bit of property he had in the world, every dollar in his possession he furnished for that medium and the cure of his child. Then they placed it on the hand. Then they noticed that the diseased part began to dry up and disappear, and at last it had entirely disappeared. That great physician said, "I am sorry for every word I ever uttered against that splendid remedy for the most awful disease in human life." He said, "I do not know all about it. The fact is I do not know anything about it. I only know some of the facts concerning it, and I am absolutely sure of them, for I have seen them. They have been a part of my life." He was not able to make the explanation. No man is able to make the explanation. He simply knew the facts.—Courtland Myers, D.D.

741. How Do You Clean House?

The ancient cliff-dwellers of Arizona had a queer way of cleaning house. The smoke of their fires filled their odd stone dwellings and covered their walls with a black layer of soot.

When this became intolerable, they did not wash or scrape it off, but calmly went to work and plastered over it a fresh coat of white mortar. Investigators have found no less than eleven such coats of soot and mortar, one above the other—eleven housecleaning days, no one knows how many springs apart.

We smile; but those that live in precisely such houses should not throw stones.

I do not mean to say that our spring housecleanings are conducted in just this fashion, though I know of communities where it would not be impossible to find four or five layers of wall-paper, one over the other.

But what I do refer to is the way many of us clean house in our souls.

Instead of making a thorough job of it, rubbing and scraping and digging and washing until every least fault and every familiar sin is removed and carted to the dump, we whitewash ourselves just as we are.

The whitewash is made of carelessness and forgetfulness and conceit and presumption, and it leaves the sootiest soul a fine, glaring white. But scratch it anywhere, and — faugh! the black underneath!

Some day, under the fierce sun of God's anger, all this whitewash will peel off, and such soul-rooms will be black, black, nothing but black, and black forever.—Amos R. Wells.

742. Reformation and Regeneration.

I heard of an old negro who had what he thought to be a very valuable clock. There came a time when it refused to run for its proud owner, so he removed the hands from the face of the clock and took them to a jeweler, requesting him to fix them so they would tell the time. The astonished jeweler said, "Mose, you will have to bring the entire clock to the shop before I can fix it." The negro replied, "Look heah, Boss, you's jist tryin' to git my clock. I won't trus' dat clock wit' no strangah." There are many who are ready to offer the outward pretenses at religion by improving their morals, but refuse to submit the chronometer of a carnal heart to God the Maker and Jesus the Divine Jeweler. The timepiece of life does not need a new dial as much as it needs a new mainspring. God's call to each one is, "My son, give Me thine heart." To refuse to obey that command of God, regardless of one's moral standing, is to miss heaven in the end.—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

743. Unlikely Selected.

Dr. Isaac Barrow, when a lad, was most unpromising. Such was his misconduct and so irreclaimable did he seem that his father, in despair, used to say that "if it pleased God to remove any of his children he wished it might be his son Isaac." What became of the other and more hopeful children of the worthy linen-draper we cannot tell; but this unworthy son lived to be the happiness and pride of his father's old age, to be one of the most illustrious members of the university to which he belonged, and one of the brightest ornaments of the church of which he became a minister.—C. H. Spurgeon.

744. Transforming Miracles.

The Gunnison tunnel is one of the wonders of modern civil engineering. It is the longest underground waterway in the world, and has been constructed under the most discouraging difficulties. For four years the men, with their drills, have been at work boring the mountain, and now, finally, the President, from a platform, high above the waters, touched the button and gave the signal for the opening of the channel that will carry the water of the river over a territory of 150,000 acres and convert what is now almost worthless land into one of the richest sections of the whole west.

The story is a wonderful one of daring and skill. The Gunnison flows in a narrow gorge from two thousand to three thousand feet in depth, rushing, roaring, dashing in fruitless fury against its walls, leaping over precipices until it issues in the plain where only a few settlers have found the means of living. So deep is the canon that in places the sun is not seen, and it is consequently known as the Black Canon. The preparatory survey of the river was one of the most daring ever undertaken. No man had ever lived to pass through that gorge. When a message came from the Department at Washington inquiring about the feasibility of a tunnel, two men volunteered for the service. They were lowered straight down twenty-five hundred feet, with an outfit of a rubber mattress for a boat, some instruments and a small food supply. They committed themselves to the torrent, landing here and there to take observations and make measurements. Dashed through fearful rapids and falls, hurled through a natural tunnel into the unknown beyond, on the twelfth day they emerged, exhausted and nearly naked, cold and wet and hungry. "The Gunnison tunnel is feasible," was their brief message, and quickly their work was begun. Six miles through rock and gravel beds, striking streams of water and fumes of poisonous gas, exposed at times to falling rock, the work has been driven, and now the opening has been made, and as soon as the wall can be cemented the channel, ten and a half by eleven and a half feet, will empty thirteen hundred cubic feet of water a second into a canal twelve miles long, to make the Uncompaghre Valley one of our most productive sections.—The United Presbyterian.

745. Briar and Rosebush.

Once there was a briar growing in a ditch, and there came along a gardener with his spade. As he dug around it and lifted it out, the briar said to itself, "What is he doing that for? Doesn't he know that I am only an old worthless briar?" But the gardener took it into the garden and planted it amid his flowers, while the briar said, "What a mistake he has made! Planting an old briar like myself among such rose trees as these!" But the gardener came once more and with his keen-edged knife made a slit in the briar, and, as we say in England, "budded it" with a rose, and by and by when summer came lovely roses were blooming on that old briar. Then the gardener said, "Your beauty is not due to that which came out of you, but to that which I put into you."—M. G. Pearse.

746. Sins Swallowed Up.

You see the Thames as it goes sluggishly down through the arches, carrying with it endless impurity and corruption. You watch the inky stream as it pours along day and night, and you think it will pollute the world. But you have just been down to the seashore, and you have looked on the great deep, and it has not left a stain on the Atlantic. No, it has been running down a good many years and carried a world of impurity with it, but when you go to the Atlantic there is not a speck on it. As to the ocean, it knows nothing about it. It is full of majestic music. So the smoke of London goes up, and has been going up for a thousand years. One would have thought that it would have spoiled the scenery by now; but you get a look at it sometimes. There is the great blue sky which has swallowed up the smoke and gloom of a thousand years, and its azure splendour is unspoiled. It is wonderful how the ocean has kept its purity, and how the sky has taken the breath of the millions and the smoke of the furnaces, and yet it is as pure as the day that God made it. It is beautiful to think that these are only images of God's great pity for the race. Our sins, they are like the Thames, but, mind you, they shall be swallowed up—lost in the depths of the sea, to be remembered against us no more. Though our sins have been going up to heaven through the generations, yet, though thy sins are as crimson, they shall be as wool, as white as snow.—W. L. Watkinson.

747. Transformations.

Mr. Ruskin, in his "Modern Painters," tells that the black mud or slime from a footpath in the outskirts of a manufacturing town—the absolute type of impurity—is composed of four elements—clay, mixed with soot, a little sand, and water. These four may be separated each from the other. The clay particles, left to follow their own instinct of unity, became a clear, hard substance, so set that it can deal with light in a wonderful way and gather out of it the loveliest blue rays only, refusing the rest. We call it then a sapphire. The sand arranges itself in mysterious, infinitely fine parallel lines, which reflect the blue, green, purple and red rays in the greatest beauty. We call it then an opal. The soot becomes the hardest thing in the world, and for the blackness it had obtains the power of reflecting all the rays of the sun at once in the vividest blaze that any solid thing can shoot. We call it then a diamond. Last of all, the water becomes a dewdrop, and a crystalline star of snow. Thus God can and does transform the vilest sinners into pure and shining jewels fit for His home in heaven. —Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

748. New Man in Old Clothes.

A man got up in one of our meetings in New York some years ago who had been pretty far down, but a wonderful change had taken place, and he said he hardly knew himself. He said the fact was, he was a new man in his old clothes.

That was just it. Not a man in new clothes, but a new man in old clothes.

I saw an advertisement which reads like this: "If you want people to respect you, wear good clothes." That is the world's idea of getting the world's respect. Why? A leper may put on new clothes, but he is a leper still. Mere profession doesn't transform a man. It is the new nature spoken of in 2nd Corinthians, 5th chapter, 17th verse, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—D. L. Moody.

749. All Things New.

Billy Bray, the Cornish evangelist, whose wonderful work in the West of England is well known, speaks thus of the sense of newness that he experienced on his conversion: "I said to the Lord: 'Thou hast said, they that ask shall receive, they that seek shall find, and to them that knock the door shall be opened, and I have faith to believe it.' In an instant the Lord made me happy that I cannot express what I felt. I shouted for joy. I preached God with my whole heart. . . . I think this was in November, 1823, but what day of the month I do not know. I remember this, that everything looked new to me, the people, the fields, the cattle, the trees. I was like a new man in a new world. I spent the greater part of my time in praising the Lord."—F. W. Bourne.

750. Cleansing Power.

What is the blackest thing in all the world? Not jet, nor ebony; not the raven's plume, nor the pupil of an Ethiop's eye. The blackest thing in all the world is said to be the blight at the heart of a flower when it is just stricken with death. So the blackest thing in the moral universe is sin at the centre of a soul, spreading corruption through the whole nature of man.

What is the reddest thing in all the world? Not the glow of the sunrise or of the sunset; not the heart of the ruby. The reddest thing in the world is the stream that flows from the fountain of life. Blood; "the life is in the blood." The most vivid of all tragedies is that of Calvary. In all the moral universe there is naught that so touches the heart of the race.

What is the whitest thing in the world? The whitest thing in the world is the driven snow, for this is not superficial, but whiteness through and through. In all the moral universe there is nothing so glorious as the whiteness of holiness; the fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints.

What is the greatest thing in the world? Love! Aye. Not our love to God, but God's love to us, manifest in Jesus Christ. The love that holds the hyssop-branch of our frail faith and with it sprinkles the blood upon the soul defiled with the blackness of sin, until it becomes as white as the driven snow. This is the marvellous alchemy of grace. There is forgiveness with God.—D. J. Burrell.

751. God's Paper Mill.

A frightfully wicked woman working in one of the great paper mills of Glasgow was converted through the efforts of a city missionary, and became a person of great devoutness of character. She described the process of her salvation in these terms: "I was like the rags that go into the paper mill. They are torn and filthy, but they come out clear, white paper. That is like what Jesus is doing for me." That is, indeed, the work which the great Redeemer is doing for millions of our race. That is the method by which the kingdom of God is being made triumphant in the earth.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

752. Free Ticket.

A lady, when spoken to about her soul, said, "I can not understand why one who has tried to lead a good, moral life should not stand a better chance of heaven than a wicked person." "Suppose we wanted to go into a place of interest where the admission fee was one dollar. You have fifty cents, I have nothing, which would stand the better chance of admission?" "Neither," was her reply. "Just so; therefore the moral man stands no better chance than the outbreaking sinner. But suppose a rich man who saw our perplexity presented a ticket of admission to both, at his own expense, what then?" "We could both go in." "Thus when the Saviour saw our perplexity, He came, He died, and obtained eternal redemption for us! and now He offers all a free ticket to heaven. Only take good care that your fifty cents does not make you too proud and refuse the free ticket, and so be refused admittance at last."—S. S. Lesson Illustrator.

753. New Birth.

Human nature is too bad to be improved, too dilapidated to be repaired. Here is a cracked bell. How again to restore it? By one of two methods. The first is to repair the bell, to encompass it with hoops, to surround it with bands. Nevertheless, you can easily discern the crack of the bell in the crack of the sound. The only effectual way is to remelt the bell, recast it, and make it all new; then it will ring clear, round sonorous. And human nature is a bell, suspended high up in the steeple of creation, to ring forth the praises of the Creator. But in the fall in Eden the bell cracked. How again to restore it? By one of two ways. One is to surround it with outward laws and regulations, as with steel hoops. This is the method adopted by philosophy, as embodied in practical statesmanship, and without doubt there is a marked improvement in the sound. Nevertheless, the crack in the metal shows itself in the crack of the tone. The best way is to remelt it, recast it, remold it; and this is God's method in the Gospel. He remelts our being, refashions us, makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus, zealous unto good works; and by and by we shall sound forth His praises in a nobler, sweeter strain than ever we did before. Heaven's high arches will be made to echo our anthems of praise.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

754. Heart Must Be Changed.

A man may beat down the bitter fruit from an evil tree until he is weary; whilst the root abides in strength and vigour, the beating down of the present fruit will not hinder it from bringing forth more. This is the folly of some men; they set themselves with all earnestness and diligence against the appearing eruption of lust, but leaving the principle and root untouched, perhaps unsearched out, they make but little or no progress in this work of mortification.—John Owen.

755. Human Help of No Avail.

About twenty years ago a fisherman on the way to his boat met his little boy, who pleaded with him to be taken on the little voyage across to the neighboring island. The fisherman looked at the waves; they had begun to put on their white caps of wrath, and the swell of the sea had commenced, and he hesitated; but at last he allowed his boy to go. All seemed well in the smack, till half way across a sudden squall caught the canvas and flung the father and his assistant into the deep. They caught hold of the rope that attached the little boat behind the smack and climbed in and were saved. Looking back, they saw the smack on her beam end, filling rapidly, and a pale, white little face, the face of the little boy, at the cabin window. He had been sent down below when the squall had come. The father, in desperation, flung himself on the sinking smack. One blow of his strong fist shattered the window, and the little face there still looked out, but he could not escape; what could the father do? The window was too small. The man was nearly demented; he tried to tear the beams from the sinking vessel, but they were too strong; and the little boy, in his homely Scotch, said, "Daddy, save me, help me!" Deeper and deeper the smack turned on her side; and the tears streamed down the little white face, and down the face of the despairing father. At last he cried, "God help thee, my laddie, I canna!" Down went the smack, with a gurgle and a foaming bubble, and that was all. That father never went to sea again. Twenty years passed, and on his death-bed it was the same cry, "God help thee, my laddie, I canna!" Dear soul, you are in greater danger than that little fisher lad. You're sinking. God help you, you immortal soul; you're sinking; and I cannot help you, your father can't, your mother can't. God help thee!—John Robertson.

REPENTANCE.

756. Repentance Is Not Alike in All.

Let every man come to God in his own way. God made you on purpose, and me on purpose, and He does not say to you, "Repent, and feel as Deacon A. feels," or, "Repent, and feel as your minister feels," but, "Come just as you are, with your mind and heart and education and circumstances." You are too apt to feel that your religious experience must be the same as others have; but where will you find analogies for this? Certainly not in nature. God's works do not come from His hand like coins from the mint. It seems as if it were a necessity that each one should be in some sort distinct from every other. No two leaves on the same tree are precisely alike; no two buds on the same bush have the same unfolding, nor do they seek to have.—H. W. Beecher.

757. Gate Too Narrow.

"Thou didst send for me," said Savonarola to Lorenzo the Magnificent, the tyrant of Florence, as he lay on his dying bed. "Yes," said Lorenzo, "for three sins lie heavy on my soul," and then he told the monk how he was tortured by the remembrance of the sack of Volterra, and his robbery of a bank whereby many poor girls had lost their all and been driven to lives of shame, and the bloody reprisals he took after a political conspiracy against him. "God is good," replied Savonarola, "God is merciful. But," he at once added, "three things are needful." "What things?" asked Lorenzo anxiously. "First, a great and living faith in God's mercy." 'I have the fullest faith in it," replied the dying man.

"Secondly, you must restore all your ill-gotten wealth." At this Lorenzo writhed, but at last he gave a nod of assent. "Lastly," said Savonarola to the cowering prince, "you must restore to Florence her liberty." And Lorenzo angrily turned his back upon the preacher and said never a word. The gate was too "narrow."—J. D. Jones.

758. Repent of Sin Itself.

The Spartan lad was taught that there was no wrong in anything he did, but that the wrong was in being found out. Consequently, when one lad had stolen a white pet fox and hidden it under his tunic, he allowed the fox to gnaw into his very breast, and yet made no sign. The theft of the fox was nothing, but being found out was everything! Regret for the consequences of sin, or the exposure of sin, or the penalties of sin, is no real element of a godly repentance. —A. T. Pierson.

759. Condition of True Repentance.

In Adam Bede, George Eliot represents the heroine Dinah Morris as thus pointing out to the unhappy Hetty Sorrel the conditions of true repentance: "God can't bless you while you have one falsehood in your soul; His pardoning mercy can't reach you until you open your heart to Him, and say, 'I have done this great wickedness; O God, save me, make me pure from sin.' While you cling to one sin and will not part with it, it must drag you down to misery after death, as it has dragged you to misery here in this world, my poor, poor Hetty. It is sin that brings dread, and darkness, and despair; there is light and blessedness for us as soon as we cast it off; God enters our souls then, and teaches us, and brings us strength and peace."—Rev. Harry Rogers, D.D.

760. More Time for Repentance.

John Hardonk, while on shipboard, dreamed one night that the day of judgment had come, and that the roll of the ship's crew was called except his own name, and that this crew were all banished; and in his dream he asked the reader why his own name was omitted; and he was told it was to give him more opportunity for repentance. He woke up a different man. He became illustrious for Christian attainment.—T. De Witt Talmage.

761. Friend in Need.

I read of a lad that left home to make a way for himself in the world. As many before him, so had he wasted his substance, and the inevitable time of reckoning came. He sought assistance from friends and companions, but in a little while they all tired of helping him. In his last distress he determined to write home. Watch him! Read the note! "Dear Father," the pathetic appeal ran, "I am ill and undone. I have been foolish and sinful and have forgotten the spirit of your home. I want to get well, live right and be a man. But I cannot unless you help me. I deeply need your help, and I think you love me enough to forgive all, and to help me now. Will you come?" The next train found that father speeding on his way to his needy son, to put his strength, his character, his resources at the service of the son who was to be placed once more on the road to manhood. That father was a paraclete, a called one, a friend that soothes and strengthens and inspires. It was in this sense that the Greeks used the word "Paraclete," a word forever consecrated by the Lord in applying to Himself and to the Holy Spirit. For He does apply the word to Himself when He calls the Holy Spirit "another Paraclete."—J. F. Carson.

762. True Penitent's Feeling Toward Sin.

I once walked into a garden with a lady to gather some flowers. There was one large bush whose branches were bending under the weight of the most beautiful roses. We both gazed upon it with admiration. There was one flower on it which seemed to shine above all the rest in beauty. This lady pressed forward into the thick bush and reached far over to pluck it. As she did this, a black snake, which was hidden in the bush, wrapped itself around her arm. She was alarmed beyond all description, and ran from the garden, screaming, and almost in convulsions. During all that day she suffered very much with fear; her whole body trembled, and it was a long time before she could be quieted. That lady is still alive. Such is her hatred now of the whole serpent race that she has never since been able to look at a snake, even though it were dead. No one could ever persuade her to venture again into a cluster of bushes, even to pluck a beautiful rose. Now this is the way the sinner acts who truly repents of his sins. He thinks of sin as the serpent that once coiled itself round him. He hates it. He dreads it. He flies from it. He fears the places it inhabits. He does not willingly go into the haunts. He will no more play with sin than this lady would afterwards have fondled snakes.—Bishop Meade.

763. Trachoma Parable.

Miriam Zartarian is a pleasant-faced, attractive young Armenian girl, who was kept in the detention-pen of the Boston Immigration Station for nearly two years. What was the cause of this long imprisonment? That disease of the eyes, trachoma, which is so properly dreaded in this country that those afflicted with it are not permitted to land. Miriam was a victim of the disease, but she could not be sent back to Turkey because her parents lived in Boston, and she was coming over to them.

Well, for two years Uncle Sam has been a foster father to this Armenian girl, and you may be sure she has had the best of care. She came to love the immigration officials and the attendants at the station, and they came to love her. At last it was thought that her eyes were cured. A medical board of special inquiry was constituted by the Washington authorities. The newspapers aroused public interest in her case, and the verdict was eagerly awaited. At last a telegram was received bearing the good news from Secretary Straus. The Armenian captive was free, and all Boston rejoiced.

Now, I see in this incident a striking illustration of the conditions that bar souls from heaven. There is only one prohibition, only one thing that cannot enter there—the terrible disease of sin.

No one charges the Government of the United States with tyranny because it forbids the coming of trachoma. The law is reasonable and necessary. The people would insist upon such a law if there were none. It is even more reasonable and necessary that sin should be shut out of heaven. Sin is a disease far worse than trachoma. It is more contagious. It is more harmful. Heaven would not be heaven if it were admitted.

And just as all Boston was glad when Miriam Zartarian's eyes grew better, so that she could come in, so there is joy among the angels of God when one sinner repents and enters into the blessed citizenship of heaven. Whether admitted or excluded, it is all of righteousness and it is all of love.—Amos R. Wells.

764. Two Knees, or One?

William Dawson once told this story to illustrate how humble the soul must be before it can find peace. He said that at a revival meeting a little lad, who was used to Methodist ways, went home to his mother and said, "Mother, John So-and-So is under conviction and seeking peace; but he will not find it to-night, mother." "Why, William?" said she. "Because he is only down on one knee, mother; and he will never get peace until he is down on both knees." Until conviction of sin brings us down on both knees, until we are completely humbled, until we have no hope in ourselves left, we cannot find the Saviour.—Christian Herald.

765. Death-Bed Repentance.

Do not try a death-bed repentance, my brother. I have stood by many a death-bed, and few indeed have there been where I could have believed that the man was in a condition physically (to say nothing of anything else) clearly to see and grasp the message of the Gospel. I know that God's mercy is boundless. I know that a man, going—swept down that great Niagara—if, before his little skiff tilts over into the awful rapids, he can make one great bound with all his strength, and reach the solid ground—I know he may be saved. It is an awful risk to run. A moment's miscalculation, and skiff and voyager alike are whelming in the green chaos below, and come up mangled into nothing, far away down yonder over the white, turbulent foam. "One was saved upon the cross," as the old divines used to tell us, "that none might despair, and only one, that none might presume." — A. Maclaren, D.D.

766. Painting the Pump.

Reformation is no more the whole of Christianity than cultivation constitutes the whole of successful farming. A farmer may plow and harrow his ground every day of the summer and not permit a single weed to grow; that would be a high state of cultivation; but if he plants no seed in his field he will gather no crop in the autumn. Simply ridding your life of the weeds of undesirable habits, without planting the seeds of Christianity in your heart-garden, is as great a folly as for a farmer to cultivate his ground all summer and sow no seed. Repentance pulls up the weeds now growing and plants the seeds of righteousness. The man who attempts to improve by reforming is whitewashing his life, while the one who repents washes white his life, and there is a vast difference between the two processes. Morality can never save anybody. Painting the pump does not kill the typhoid germs and purify the water in the well. You may have literary circles and culture clubs, Carnegie libraries and schools of art, but this city will never be won to Christ until there is brought about an old-time revival of genuine repentance. —O. A. Newlin, D.D.

REVIVALS.

767. Hindrance to Revival.

I remember preaching in one of the cities of Indiana. For four days the church was crowded, but a crowd is not an indication of a blessing. Not infrequently the presence of a crowd is an indication of defeat, for preachers are apt under such circumstances to put their confidence in men rather than in God. During all the four days not a hand was lifted for prayer nor a single indication given that there might be an awakening on the part of the Christian people. The field I was next to labor in seemed quite ready for the harvest, and in the preparatory services many people were being saved. I called the ministers of the Indiana city together and asked them to give me the privilege of closing my engagement with them, that there was some barrier in the way of the working of God's spirit, and that I felt when I preached as if I were bound with chains. After a little conference, one of the ministers requested that the decision be withheld for a little, that he felt sure that he knew where the difficulty was. As the leader of our force of personal workers, we had one of the members of this minister's church, a man well known throughout his own state and a judge of one of the highest courts. Somehow it seemed that when this man passed through the audience he sent a cold wave over the people. From the conference of ministers the pastor of this church went into the office of this old judge and said to him:

"I have been hearing rumours on the streets for a long time that your life is not clean, and I have come to say that if these rumours are untrue I desire to take some public stand with you to contradict them; but I have also come to say that if they are true I will stand nearer to you than a brother, and help you to get free from the power of your besetting sin."

The old judge looked a moment at him, and then put his head on his arms on the desk, and sobbed out: "They are all true, and more."

In a moment they were on their knees in prayer, and it was but a moment more before the old judge rose a delivered man, free from the power of his sin.

I was just lifting my hands to pronounce the benediction at the close of an afternoon service when the church door opened, and the old judge came in. Having lifted his hand to ask permission to speak, he made this statement:

"My friends, I have been known for years as one of the members of the church and as an officer of the church, but for a long time my life has been robbed of its power and my soul of its peace. I have lost my influence in my home, and I fear almost altogether in my city. But I have gotten right with my minister and right with God, and I have come to ask your forgiveness."

The confession was made with sobs. There was no benediction pronounced that afternoon. The people all filed out one way. Some took the hand of the judge to say, "God bless you," some to say nothing, but to pass with tear-wet cheeks and burning hearts. But when the evening service came, and the sermon had been preached, there was a remarkable change. The atmosphere seemed like heaven. Fully fifty people pressed their way to the front to accept

Christ as their Saviour. The first man to come was the old judge, with his arm around a poor lost man, who was hopefully saved. In less than six days more than five hundred people came pressing their way into the kingdom.

It is likewise a possible thing to have been filled at one time with the Spirit, and after all to make a failure of one's life. It is not enough to live on the old experiences, however precious they may have been. It is not enough to have been once filled, we must all the time be kept full, and we can only thus be kept by living in close fellowship and uninterrupted communion with Jesus Christ.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

768. Danger of Revival Meetings.

The life-saver dashes out into the raging water and comes to shore with a man who, but for him, would have perished. He turns the half-drowned man over to the group on the shore and goes back to work. The next day we learn that the rescued man has died, and we say, "Ah! there is the danger in saving men." It is true that he was lost where he was. It is true that we left the poor fellow just where the rescuer laid him when he was brought out of the water. Some people might say that he really died of neglect and exposure, and—he did. The same thing is true of the large proportion of those who do not long survive the special meeting. We are not willing to work to hold what we worked to get. There is peril, real peril, surrounding the soul that has lately been brought to shore, but it is not in the revival, but in the afterward. Surely the displeasure of God must rest upon the church that refuses to enter into an effort to bring men and women to Christ, because it does not want to take the responsibility of caring for them until they have become strong.—Mattie M. Boteler.

769. Revivals Commence with the Few.

Begin with a part of the Church instead of attempting to move the whole mass together. Those of us who were country boys know how impossible it is to make a fire out of green logs alone; but if we can get some dry sticks kindled around and underneath these green logs, we can make a very hot fire with them. Don't begin your revival by trying to rouse the whole unseasoned mass of Church members, but begin with a few of the most spiritual, and from these work out towards the others. Lyman Beecher said, in answer to the question, How can we promote a revival in the Church? "First get revived yourself, then get some brother Church member revived, and the work has begun." That is practical wisdom.—A. J. Gordon.

770. Send Me.

I heard once of a man who dreamed that he was swept into heaven, and he was there in the glory world, and oh, he was so delighted to think that he had at last made heaven. And all at once one came and said, "Come, I want to show you something." And he took him to the battlements and said, "Look down yonder; what do you see?" "I see a very dark world." "Look and see if you know it." "Why, yes," he said, "that is the world I have come from." "What do you see?" "Why, men are blindfolded there; many of them are going over a precipice." "Well, will you stay here and enjoy heaven, or will you go back to earth and spend a little longer time, and tell those men about this world?" He was a worker who had been discouraged. He awoke from his sleep and said, "I have never wished myself dead since."—D. L. Moody.

771. Passion for Souls.

Spurgeon once said that a bird, when it is setting on its eggs, or when the little ones are newly hatched, has about it a mother spirit, so that it devotes all of its life to the feeding of its little ones; other birds may be taking their pleasures on the wing, but this bird sits still the livelong day and night, or its only flights are to provide for gaping mouths which seem never to be filled. A passion has taken possession of the bird; and something like it comes over the true soul-winner. He would gladly die to win souls; he pines; he pleads; he plods to bless those on whom his heart is set. If these could be saved, he would pawn half his heaven for it; aye, and sometimes, in moments of enthusiasm, he is ready to barter heaven altogether to win souls. Give us a passion like that in this church, so that we all feel that all our work connected with the church, Sunday and week-day, fails of its supreme purpose unless it is redeeming the lost; unless it is winning back men and women who are in danger of eternal defeat, and nothing can stand in the way of our spiritual conquest.—L. A. Banks.

772. Activity Without Progress.

Two sailors happened to be on a military parade-ground when the soldiers were at drill, going through the evolution of marking time. One sailor, observing the other watching the movement of the company very attentively, with eyes fixed and arms akimbo, asked him what he thought of it. "Well, Jack," replied his comrade, "I am thinking there must be a pretty strong tide running this morning, for these poor fellows have been pulling away this half-hour, and have not got an inch ahead yet."—"Original Fables."

773. Just a Poor Sinner.

The church of which Mr. Samuel Colgate was a member entered into an agreement to make special prayer for the conversion of sinners. For some days they prayed earnestly. One day applicants for church-membership were invited to present themselves. A woman came forward. Heart-broken, she told her story of what a sinner she had been, and how God had forgiven her for Christ's sake, and she wished to slip into a corner of the church and have the fellowship of God's people as she made the start for heaven. The silence was oppressive. Then a member arose and moved that action on the application be postponed. Mr. Colgate arose and said, in substance: "I guess we made a blunder when we asked the Lord to save sinners. We did not specify what kind. I think we had better all ask God to forgive us for not specifying what kind of sinners we want saved. He probably did not understand what we wanted." They all saw the point. The woman was received into fellowship.

—B. W. Spilman.

774. Power of Concentration.

In the eighteenth century, an immense burning glass was constructed in France, in which all the heat, falling on a great lens, was then concentrated on a smaller one till at the focus such was the heat that iron, gold and other metals ran like melted butter. Another one, made in England by Parker, fused the most refractory substances, and diamonds were reduced by it to vapour.—H. O. Mackey.

775. Curse of Silence.

As I look round London, I see a most tremendous battle eternally going on, I have got to know of late years more of the inner life of some of the great factories, warehouses, houses of business, than I knew five years ago; and I know that there is a battle in every one of those great houses such as sometimes we, who are outside of them, seldom suspect. Just imagine what that lad has to bear who hears the filthy talk about women from the men, perhaps the elder men, of the place, who ought to be setting him an example. It is only evidence from place after place which I am absolutely bound to believe that has shown me how strong the battle is, where men and lads are herded together day after day. I have known many a man who has had to stand a positive persecution; I know some now who are in a terribly hot part of the battle. And I can imagine the Captain who is watching it all, and sees the man, perhaps the foreman, perhaps the elder clerk, who, by his position, is the man to put down that kind of thing, skulking and doing nothing; and I can almost hear the curse of God ring over the man's head, "Curse ye Meroz, curse him because when my little lads are in their day of trial he comes not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."—Bishop A. F. Ingram.

776. Rescue the Perishing.

A newspaper writer, commenting on the craven conduct of the officers of the Larchmont, which went down in Long Island Sound not long since, compared it with the valorous spirit of Captain Luce of the Arctic more than fifty years ago, who remained with his ship until she sank into the depths of the sea. It was not his fault that he survived. He was rescued, by no attempt of his own, from the waves in which he had been engulfed, but he passed his remaining days in avoiding society. Though it was no fault of his that he was living, he was ashamed to be alive while his passengers were dead. If, by the grace of God, we find ourselves in the home of the saved, rescued by infinite love, will it not tinge the happiness of heaven with bitterness to reflect that, while we have escaped destruction, we did little or nothing to rescue the perishing?—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

777. Life in Christ.

There is a project for turning the great desert of North-Western Africa into an inland sea by cutting through the bank which separates its vast depressed surface from the Atlantic; so that large existing populations may be reached, and new towns and fertile country may fringe the then obliterated wilderness of death with smiling contentment and prosperity. It may be but a scientific romance. But it points to the holy privilege and blessed service of the Christian Church. Our Master says: "Speak the words of this life. Cut through the bank of ignorance and prejudice and worldliness and sin, and admit upon the vast spiritual deadness of the world the rolling tide of a pure and immortal life, that souls and churches and nations may spring up in the freshness of Gospel life, and wear the everlasting beauty of Him who has redeemed them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end."—W. H. Jackson.

778. Take Your Bearings.

A great preacher has told us that he was passing along a hillside one pitch dark night and had completely lost his way. Suddenly the clouds rolled back, the moon rode out in regal splendour. He saw the hedge and the river, and the road lying like a white ribbon over the shoulder of the hill, and he knew where he was. Then, as suddenly, the clouds rolled back again, and the mirk dark resumed its sway, but he had taken his bearings, and knew his way home. The revival passes, but the memory of it remains in abiding inspiration. Men have dreamed of a perpetual revival, but in that narrow sense, it has not come, and never will come. There is a Day of Grace and there is a night.—H. F. Sayles.

779. Sounding the Call.

During the Spanish-American War some transports with supplies for General Shafter's army found it impossible to secure anchorage off the coast of Cuba, and were compelled to steam slowly back and forth. This made it difficult to land the horses and mules, and it was finally decided upon to push them overboard and allow them to swim ashore. So they were pushed into the water, and soon the sea was black with animals. Some instinctively swam toward the shore; others completed circles in the water; still others, more frightened than the rest, started out to sea. It was a distressing situation, and the ship's officers showed much concern.

Finally the men who were aboard the transports espied a soldier on shore hastily making his way toward a rocky promontory. The stripes upon his uniform denoted the bugler. The jutting rocks reached, he placed the bugle to his lips and emitted one after another of the calls which the army horses and mules had learned to know so well. The sound traveled far out to sea, and was heard by every bewildered, struggling creature. Instinctively they turned and swam toward the call. The bugler stood there and sounded those calls until his lips were blue, and, when he finally did cease, every confused and trembling animal was safe.

That is about the way it is with God's call. He needs some one to sound it, and if Christians will but faithfully and earnestly sound the good tidings of the Master they will fall upon the ears of misguided and erring ones somewhere and sometime, and will be to them the means of salvation. It matters not that we may not understand how our feeble and hampered efforts are to win others to Christ. God will take care of that. It is for us to lift His call, to sound His good tidings—and to leave the rest with Him.—Zion's Herald.

SATAN.

780. Satan's Right of Way.

I found when I was studying law that there was a law of "reserved right." For instance, suppose I should sell ten thousand acres of land, and should retain one acre in the center. I would have a right to go over those 9999 acres to get to mine. One trouble with us is that we reserve a room in our hearts which belongs to Satan, and he knows it and uses his right of way.—Record of Christian Work.

781. Answer to the Devil.

A minister asked a little converted boy, "Does not the devil tell you that you are not a Christian?" "Yes, sometimes." "Well, what do you say?" "I tell him," replied the boy, "whether I am a Christian or not is none of his business."—New Cyclopedia of Illustrations.

782. Satan Will Advance If the Christian Does Not.

The Confederate General Longstreet, during the battle of Gettysburg, had one of his generals come up to him and report that he was unable to bring up his men again so as to charge the enemy. "Very well," said the general, "just let them remain where they are; the enemy's going to advance, and will spare you the trouble."—W. Baxendale.

783. Devil Blinds and Soothes.

David Livingstone tells us that when he was under the paw of a lion, when one time, from the recesses of the forest, the great beast was on him, and pinned him to the ground; he felt the breath of the lion soothing him to sleep. There was something in the breath that brought a dimness over the eyes, and a soothing to the spirit; and the bloody fangs of the lion that were getting read to devour him were prefaced by this blinding by the very presence of the beast of prey. Ay, the devil causes a similar unconsciousness. I believe that positively there is an influence from the presence of the devil in a temptation.

I believe that physically like what Livingstone described, psychically like it, and spiritually like it, the devil blinds and soothes, and makes unconscious to the realities of God, and heaven, and hell, making you unconscious of what you are about. Then he lights up the imagination, to the galleries of the spirit he brings pictures and desires, and at last sets you on fire with the fire of hell, the passions of the soul.—John Robertson.

784. Devil's Best Tool.

It was once announced that the devil was going out of business and would offer all tools for sale to whoever would pay his price. On the night of the sale they were all attractively displayed, and a bad looking lot they were: Malice, Hatred, Envy, Jealousy, Sensuality, and Deceit, and all the other implements of evil were spread out, each marked with its price. Apart from the rest lay a harmless-looking wedge-shaped tool, much worn and priced higher than any of them.

Some one asked the devil what it was. "That's discouragement," was the reply.

"Why do you have it priced so high?"

"Because," replied the devil, "it is more useful to me than any of the others."

"I can pry open and get inside a man's consciousness with that when I could not get near him with any of the others, and when once inside I can use him in whatever way suits me best. It is so much worn because I use it with nearly everybody as very few people yet know it belongs to me."

It hardly need be added that the devil's price for discouragement was so high that it was never sold. He still owns it and is still using it.—Rev. E. E. Hendricks, D.D.

785. Overcoming Satan No Holiday Task.

In the great Church of the Capuchins at Rome there is a famous picture, by Guido Reni, of the Archangel Michael triumphing over the Evil One. The picture represents the Archangel clad in bright armour and holding in his hand a drawn sword, with one foot planted upon the head of Satan, who in the form of a dragon or serpent grovels and writhes beneath him. A sense of victory, not unmingled with defiance, shines on the Archangel's face; while Satan's every feature is distorted with suffering and hatred. And as we look at the picture, we can hardly fail to see in it the image, the representation, so often depicted, so earnestly longed for, of the final victory of good over evil. What, however, to many at any rate, gives to this picture a peculiar interest is the famous criticism passed upon it in a well-known modern work of fiction, Hawthorne's Transfiguration. The Archangel—so it is there objected—has come out of the contest far too easily. His appearance and attitude give no idea of the death-struggle which always takes place before vice can be overcome by virtue. His sword should have been streaming with blood; his armour dented and crushed; he should not have been placing his foot delicately upon his frustrate foe, but pressing it down hard as if his very life depended upon the result.—G. Milligan.

786. A Trick on the Devil.

I thank God for every churchman in my town. There are some trifling members, but then I am talking about the good members. The devil has worried me lots about the trifling members of my church. I have learned a new trick on the devil. He has worried me a heap by trotting out an old hypocrite and asking, "What do you think of him?" When he does that, I propose to just trot out old Brother Loveless here in town (one of the best old men God ever made), and ask the devil what he thinks of him,—and the devil will have to walk off. Whenever the devil trots out a hypocrite, you trot out a first-class man, and the devil will have business somewhere else at once.—Sam Jones.

787. Partners of the Devil.

Mr. Thomas, one of the missionary brethren of Serampore, was one day, after addressing a crowd of natives on the banks of the Ganges, accosted by a Brahmin as follows: "Sir, don't you say that the devil tempts men to sin?" "Yes," answered Mr. Thomas. "Then," said the Brahmin, "certainly the fault is the devil's, the devil, therefore, and not man, ought to suffer punishment." While the countenances of many of the natives disclosed their approbation of the Brahmin's inference, Mr. Thomas, observing a boat, with several men on board, descending the river, with that facility of instructive retort for which he was so much distinguished, replied, "Brahmin, do you see yonder boat?" "Yes." "Suppose I were to send some of my friends to destroy every person on board, and bring me all that is valuable in the boat,—who ought to suffer punishment?—I for instructing them or they for doing this wicked act?" "Why," answered the Brahmin, with emotion, "you ought to be put to death together." "Ay, Brahmin," replied Mr. Thomas, "and if you and the devil sin together, the devil and you will be punished together."—H. F. Sayles.

788.—Satan a Hinderer.

I remember standing in front of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, in Paris, admiring its beautiful statuary. As I did so a Parisian approached me and said, "Do you not see something amusing up there?" "No!" I said, "it seems to be all religious." Inwardly I was asking myself, "Is this an Atheist, or is he making fun of me?" "Do you see those figures?" he inquired, pointing to a group representing a soul being weighed to see if it should be found wanting. "You observe that there is an angel standing on the one side and Satan on the other. Satan seems as if he were just watching to see if there were fair play." "Yes," I answered, "but I fail to see anything amusing in that." "Just look under the scales!" he replied. I looked, and there underneath was a little imp pulling down the scale. That is the way Satan gives fair play. A man says, "I will reform. I will mend my life. I will give up drink." "All right," says Satan, and he seems to stand aside and give fair play. Do not trust him. He has some unseen imp hanging on against you. If it be not strong drink, it will be some other sin. The only way to get clear of all these is to get Christ beside you; His power and grace will outweigh all the evil influences of Satan.—Christian Herald.

789. Satan's Offspring.

In 1740, according to records, a woman was born named Ada Take. True to her name, she took everything there was to be had in the way of liberties and licenses. She died a confirmed drunkard, and altogether she had 700 descendants. Among them were 100 children born out of wedlock, 181 women of the street, 142 beggars, 46 work-house inmates, and 76 criminals. It has been estimated that this woman cost the country $1,200,000.—Presbyterian Record.

790. Creating a Devil.

You have heard the story of Frankenstein: how a great chemist strives to make a man, and builds the physical frame up bone by bone, and sinew by sinew, and at last finds some occult means whereby he breathes into him the spirit of life, and the monster moves and lives. He is its creator; and from that hour the thing which he has made haunts him, dogs him, will not let him rest, is a walking terror he cannot evade, a hideous presence from which he can not flee. So he who raises the devil of impure delight raises a devil very difficult to lay. It enters in, and brings with it seven other devils worse than itself. It quenches conscience, it masters the will, it destroys too often intellectual pleasures, it robs the mind of peace, and visits the body with loathsome suffering, till of a man made in God's image it leaves something worse than a beast; and it makes the body, which should be the temple of the Holy Ghost, the mere agent and minister of infamous delights. Purity: it is embodied in an Elijah whose thoughts are full of God, whose

Strength is as the strength of ten,
Because his heart is pure.
—W. J. Dawson.

791. Devil to Be Resisted.

A gentleman, who has spent many years of his life in capturing wild animals, says of the wolf, that, when attacked, he will first note the earnestness with which the enemy presses the attack, and, if he shows great determination, he scampers away. But if he detects the least fear in his pursuer's movements, he will defend himself with great bravery. The same way with old Satan: he tempts us by first placing some trivial thing in our paths; and if we offer no resistance, he sudenly attacks us with all his force, and overcomes us.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

SECOND COMING.

792. Watch.

McCheyne, the Scotch preacher, once said to some friends, "Do you think Christ will come tonight?"

One after another they said, "I think not."

When all had given this answer, he solemnly repeated this text: "The Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not."—H. F. Sayles.

793. Queen Victoria's Heart.

Though Dean Farrar was the privileged friend of Queen Victoria, he seldom referred to this distinction. But he did so on the occasion of the first anniversary of the accession of Edward VI to the throne of England, during the service in Canterbury Cathedral, when he related that Queen Victoria, after hearing one of her chaplains preach at Windsor on the second advent of Christ, spoke to the dean about it and said: "Oh, how I wish that the Lord would come during my lifetime." "Why does your majesty feel this very earnest desire?" asked the great preacher. With her countenance illuminated by deep emotion the Queen replied, "Because I should so love to lay my crown at His feet."—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

794. When He Comes.

A gentleman visiting a certain school gave out that he would give a prize to the pupil whose desk he found in the best order when he returned. "But when will you return?" some of them asked.

"That I cannot tell," was the answer.

A little girl, who had been noted for her disorderly habits, announced that she meant to win the prize.

"You!" her schoolmates jeered; "why, your desk is always out of order."

"Oh! but I mean to clean it the first of every week."

"But suppose he should come at the end of the week?" some one asked.

"Then I will clean it every morning."

"But he may come at the end of the day."

For a moment the little girl was silent. "I know what I'll do," she said decidedly; "I'll just keep it clean."

So it must be with the Lord's servants who would be ready to receive the prize of His coming. It may be at midnight, at cock-crowing, or in the morning. The exhortation is not, "Get ye ready," but, "Be ye ready."—Mattie M. Boteler.

795. Coming Deliverer.

During the dark days of the struggle for Italian liberty the people generally looked upon Garibaldi as their invincible deliverer. Prisoners, hurried away to loathsome dungeons, would be cheered as they passed along the streets by friends whispering in their ears, "Courage, Garibaldi is coming!" Men would steal out at night and chalk on the walls and pavements, "Garibaldi is coming!" And when the news of his approach near to a city was announced the people broke out into the rapturous shout, "Garibaldi is coming!" He came, and Italy broke her political and religious fetters, never to be so enslaved again. A greater than Garibaldi is coming to God's people. The Desire of all nations is on the way. Jesus is coming, coming to reign, and His kingdom is joy, peace, blessing eternal. —H. O. Mackey.

796. Waiting for the Lord.

Our dear friend, Mr. James Smith, whom some of you remember preaching the Word at Park Street, and afterwards at Cheltenham, when I saw him, some little while before his departure, described himself thus: "You have seen a passenger who has gone to the station, taken his ticket, all his luggage brought in, all packed up, strapped, directed; and you have seen him sitting with his ticket in his hand, waiting till the train comes up. That," said he, "is exactly my condition. I am ready to go as soon as my Heavenly Father pleases to come for me." And is not that how we should always live—waiting for the Lord's appearing? Mr. Whitefield used to say of his well-known order and regularity, "I like to go to bed feeling that if I were to die tonight, there is not so much as a pair of gloves out of their place." —C. H. Spurgeon.

797. Waiting for Christ's Coming.

I saw a picture the other day in a shop window, with which I was greatly pleased; it represented a room in which was a window looking out upon the sea; a lady with a grave, anxious face sat by the window, and two little children were playing on the carpet. On the table lay a letter, which seemed just to have been opened, and against the wall was hanging the portrait of a gentleman. There was very little writing underneath the picture, and very little was wanted; for I could understand the story which the picture was intended to tell, as plainly as if the painter himself had told me. The father of these little children was evidently absent from them beyond the sea. There was his portrait, but he was far away. But he had sent them a letter containing the joyful news that he was coming home again. And so there was the mother sitting at that window, day after day, and looking across the wide waters, in the hope of at last seeing the white sails of the ship which should bring the long-expected one home. Now this picture, I think, may remind us of what the Lord Jesus used to tell His disciples about His "coming again."—Ready for Work.

798. Jesus Is Coming.

Dr. Andrew Bonar, the venerable Simeon of his generation, tells us that "when those that upheld the banner of truth almost lost heart, and Protestantism seemed failing, John Knox accepted the invitation from the true-hearted ones, and left Geneva for Scotland. When he landed, quick as lightning the news spread abroad. The cry everywhere arose,—'John Knox has come!' Edinburgh came rushing into the streets; the old and young, the lowly and the low, were seen mingling together in delighted expectation. All business, all common pursuits, were suspended. The priests and friars left their altars and their masses and looked out alarmed, or were seen standing by themselves, shunned as lepers. Studious men were roused from their books; mothers set down their infants and ran to inquire what had come to pass. Travelers suddenly mounted and sped into the country with the tidings, 'John Knox has come!'

"At every cottage door the inmates stood and clustered, wondering, as horseman after horseman cried, 'Knox has come!' Ships departing from the harbor bore up to each other at sea to tell the news. Shepherds heard the tidings as they watched their flocks upon the hills. The warders in the castle challenged the sound of quick feet approaching and the challenge was answered — 'John Knox has come!' The whole land was moved; the whole country was stirred with a new inspiration, and the hearts of the enemies withered."

Oh, if that was the effect of the sudden presence of a man like ourselves,—a man whom he will rejoice to meet in the Kingdom, but only a man,—what will be the effect when the news is flashed through earth and sea and sky, "THE SON OF MAN! JESUS HAS COME!"
—Rev. Ford C. Ottman, D.D.

SELF.

799. Lack of Self-Control.

There was in the Southern army a famous colonel. They said that man wherever he went on the battle-field always had his men in absolute command — in perfect obedience. When he appeared he had a personality that seemed to control the men like no one else could. Never did he fail to win out wherever they placed him. They said it seemed impossible to defeat him, so marvellous was his control over men. When the war was over this Southern colonel went back to his old home, went down into the depths of dissipation and drunkenness, wrecked and ruined his life until his family were scattered and he was alone on the earth.

An hour came in the city of Charleston when there was a great riot on and the whole city square was crowded with people. They were having tremendous excitement. The police had tried to cope with them and had failed. The mayor had done his best. Some one shouted, "Let's go and find the colonel." They found him in his usual haunt of vice and sin, half intoxicated. They dressed him in soldiers' garments, put on the cockade and the mayor himself pinned the badge of authority upon his coat and said, "Now, Colonel, I want you to go and quell this riot and I will give you authority."

They mounted him on a white charger and sent him off to the city square. He rode through the crowd right and left, giving his orders, and in twenty minutes the whole square was as quiet as a graveyard. Within one hour he had taken off his regimentals and cockade and thrown his sword aside and was down in the saloon drinking again and within two months, alone, deserted, without a friend in the world, wrecked and ruined, he died. He slipped into a drunkard's grave and a drunkard's hell. What a tragedy! He could control other men. He could control men even on a battle-field, and in tremendous peril, but he could not control himself.—Cortland Myers.

800. Self-Importance.

During the American Revolution, it is said that an officer, not habited in his military costume, was passing by where a small company of soldiers were at work, making some repairs on a small redoubt. The commander of the little squad was giving orders to those who were under him, relative to a stick of timber which they were endeavoring to raise to the top of the works. The timber went up hard, and on this account the voice of the little great man was the oftener heard, in his regular vociferations of "Heave away! There she goes! Heave ho!' The officer before spoken of stopped his horse when he came to the place, and seeing the timber sometimes scarcely move, asked the commander why he did not take hold and render a little aid. The latter appeared to be somewhat astonished, and turning to the officer with the pomp of an emperor, said, "Sir, I am a corporal!" "You are not, though, are you?" said the officer; "I was not aware of that;" and taking off his hat and bowing, "I ask your pardon, Mr. Corporal!" Upon this he dismounted from his elegant steed, flung the bridle over a post, and lifted till the sweat stood in drops upon his forehead. When the timber was elevated to its proper station, turning to the man clothed in brief authority, "Mr. Corporal Commander," said he, "when you have another such job, and have not men enough, send to your commander-in-chief, and I will come and help you a second time." The corporal was thunder-struck; it was Washington.—Paxton Hood.

801. Self-Denial.

A European was once taken prisoner in a Mahometan land. During his captivity he amused himself by sketching. His enemies saw his handiwork. As they gazed at his skilful and curious productions, it struck them that they might turn his talent to profitable account. He was promised his liberty, on condition that he would design a new mosque. He agreed to the proposal. An elegant and substantial building was planned. At first it pleased them, and the hour of his emancipation seemed near. Some keen eye, however, made a discovery. It was found that the mosque was drawn in the shape of a cross. Disappointed and angry, they put the architect to death. Thus do some reject the Gospel. They are well pleased with the plan of salvation, until they discern in it the cross of self-denial.—The Clerical Library.

802. Self-Sufficiency.

In a certain factory for textile goods part of the instructions set up in the workroom read: "If your threads get tangled, send for the foreman." One of the workers, a diligent and busy woman, got her threads tangled, and she tried to disentangle them, but only made them worse. After that she sent for the foreman. He came and looked. Then he said to her: "You have been doing this yourself." "Yes," she replied. "But why did you not send for me, according to instructions?" he asked. Rather sullenly she answered, "I did my best." And with that tact which a real leader should possess he said quietly, "Remember that doing your best is sending for me."—Failure and Recovery.

803. An Inquirer's Dream.

One night, an inquirer, long under deep conviction, but still unsaved, dreamed that he was walking along the edge of a terrible precipice, and fell over it into a horrible abyss. As he was falling he grasped a little branch of some bush that was growing halfway down. There he hung, and cried for help. He could feel the branch giving way. He looked into the dark yawning gulf beneath, and again cried out for help. Looking up, he saw, in his dream, Christ standing on the edge, and saying, "Let go the twig, and I will save you." Looking at the terrible abyss below, he could not. He cried again; and again came the same answer. At length he felt the branch slipping, and in the utter desperateness of his despair, he let go the branch—when, lo! in an instant, the arms of Jesus were about him, and he was safe. He awoke. It was but a dream of the night. Yet from the vividness and instructiveness of its imagery, he was enabled to let go every false confidence, and rely only on the true.—The Clerical Library.

804. His Own Pilot.

I once heard of a bright, blithe boy, who loved the sea, and very young he entered upon a sailor's life. He rose to quick promotion, and while quite a young man was made the master of a ship. One day a passenger spoke to him upon the voyage, and asked if he should anchor off a certain headland, supposing he would anchor there, and telegraph for a pilot to take the vessel into port. "Anchor! No, not I. I mean to be in dock with the morning tide." "I thought, perhaps, you would signal for a pilot." "I am my own pilot," was the curt reply. Intent upon reaching port by morning he took a narrow channel to save distance. Old bronzed and grey-headed seamen turned their swart faces to the sky, which boded squally weather, and shook their heads; cautious passengers went to the young captain and besought him to take the wider course, but he only laughed at their fears, and repeated his promise to be in dock by daybreak. He was ashore before daybreak; his vessel wrecked, and he tossed upon the beach—dead! He was his own pilot. There was his blunder—fatal suicidal blunder.—The Clerical Library.

805. Boastful Building.

"Blow, O winds! Rise, O ocean! Break forth, ye elements, and try my work!" Such was the boastful inscription put upon the first Eddystone lighthouse, built by the eccentric Winstanley. His challenge was accepted, and one fearful night the sea swallowed up the tower and its builder. The next one met a similar fate, the structure and its builder, Rudyard, again perishing together.

The third was erected by Smeaton, who built it all of stone, making it a part of its rock foundation, so that the lighthouse penetrates it as a tree penetrates the soil. Upon this lighthouse no vaunting inscriptions were placed, but on the lowest course were chiseled the words: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it"; and on the keystone, above the lantern, is the exclamation: "Laus Deo!"

That structure still stands, a never-failing beaconlight to storm-tossed mariners. He who would build for eternity must not set about his task in any vainglorious, overconfident spirit. He must be careful as to his foundation, building firmly and deeply upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and relying in trust and humility upon Him who alone can enable one to reach a perfect result.—Wellspring.

806. Surrender Now!

Dr. Andrew Bonar told me how, in the Highlands of Scotland, sheep would often wander off into the rocks and get into places that they couldn't get out of. The grass on these mountains is very sweet and the sheep like it, and they will jump down ten or twelve feet, and then they can't jump back again, and the shepherd hears them bleating in distress. They may be there for days, until they have eaten all the grass. The shepherd will wait until the sheep is so faint it can not stand, and then he will put a rope around him, and he will go over and pull that sheep up out of the jaws of death.

"Why don't they go down there when the sheep first gets there?" I asked.

"Ah," he said, "they are so very foolish they would dash right over the precipice and be killed if they did!"

And that is the way with men; they won't go to God till they have no friends and have lost everything. If you are a wanderer, I tell you that the Good Shepherd will bring you back the moment you have given up trying to save yourself and are willing to let Him save you His own way.—D. L. Moody.

807. Necessity of Harmony with God.

When the battle was fought between the *Monitor* and the *Cumberland,* you remember that the *Cumberland* was sunk in water so shallow that her topgallants remained above the waves. A friend of mine, who was in Governor Andrews's cabinet, had a friend in the hold of the *Cumberland* as she went down. He was the surgeon, and was so absorbed in his attention to the wounded that he didn't escape from the hold of the vessel, and came near death by the rushing in of the howling brine. But, being a bold man, he kept in view the light which streamed through the hatchways, and, aiding himself by the rigging, at last, almost dead, reached the surface and was taken into a boat and saved. Now, the insidious and almost unseen expectation that works in human nature is that when we go down in the sea of death and eternity we shall in some way escape out of ourselves, and swim away from our own personalities, and thus leave the *Cumberland* at the bottom of the sea. The trouble with that theory is that we are the *Cumberland,* and the *Cumberland* cannot swim away from the *Cumberland,* can it?—Joseph Cook.

808. Rest Not for the Present.

Epaminondas, before going into battle with the Lacedamonians, sat down to rest for a few moments, when his seat fell under him. "That," quoth the soldiers, "bodes no good." "Nay," said their leader, with happy presence of mind, "it is an intimation to me that I have no business to be sitting here when I should be leading you against the enemy."—Percy Anecdotes.

809. Door Unlocked.

A party of friends went to pay a visit to an old parish church which was of great interest. They applied for permission, and the sexton gave them the key, saying, "You can unlock the door and go in, and I will come to you directly." They went to the door, put the key into the lock, and tried to open it, but they could not turn the key. They turned and twisted, but to no effect, and had just given up in despair when the sexton arrived. "We cannot make this lock open," said one of the party. "I beg your pardon," said the sexton, "for giving you so much trouble. I quite forgot to tell you that the door is not locked at all. All you need to do is just to lift the latch and walk in." Many people are like that. They try by their own efforts to unlock the door of salvation. But all their efforts are so much waste of time. Christ long ago unlocked the door, and all we need to do is just to lift the latch and by faith walk in.—Sunday Circle.

810. Cease from Our Own Works.

A drowning boy was struggling in the water. On shore stood his mother in an agony of fright and grief. By her side stood a strong man, seemingly indifferent to the boy's fate. Again and again did the suffering mother appeal to him to save her boy. But he made no move. By and by the desperate struggles began to abate. He was losing strength. Presently he arose to the surface, weak and helpless. At once the strong man leaped into the stream and brought the boy in safety to the shore. "Why did you not save my boy sooner?" cried the now grateful mother. "Madam, I could not save your boy as long as he struggled. He would have dragged us both to certain death. But when he grew weak, and ceased to struggle, then it was easy to save him."

To struggle to save ourselves is simply to hinder Christ from saving us. To come to the place of faith, we must pass from the place of effort to the place of accepted helplessness. Our very efforts to save ourselves turn us aside from that attitude of helpless dependence upon Christ which is the one attitude we need to take in order that he may save us. It is only when we "cease from our own works" and depend helplessly upon Him that we realize how perfectly able He is to save without any aid from us.—James H. McConkey.

811. Manufactured Fountains.

I remember of once seeing a little fountain playing in the room of a house in which I was staying. I went near to examine it and heard the click and whirr of machinery. The fountain was the product of a mechanical contrivance; it went by clockwork. It was wound up and played for a little while and then sank into stagnancy again. How different from the spring! One plays in feverish spasms; the other flows in restful persistence. "Not of works": that is the manufactured fountain. "We are His workmanship": that is the life of the spring. The Christian life is quietly natural; it is the creation of the ceaseless energy of God.—J. H. Jowett.

812. Fatal Presumption.

Well, on the Canadian shores, trusted in his prowess as a swimmer. He was a bold, brave man; he had battled his way across the English Channel, and his landing at Boulogne had been heralded in every newspaper in the world. It was a triumph of the swimming art, and he carried his trust with him to the American continent.

He looked at Niagara; the great roar of the mighty cataract awed him not. They told him of the current, of the awful whirlpool, the boiling, bubbling mass of water rushing between rocky ledges, down to the valley, and he said, "I trust in this arm. I will show you American people what an Englishman can do."

He dived into the surge, and the waves beat the very life out of him. His trust in his right arm was a mistaken trust, and so he died. It is so with you. You are expecting to gain heaven as you gain the summit of the Matterhorn in Switzerland; you are expecting to climb to the heights of heaven with your own efforts.—Selected.

813. Self-Revelation.

Cnidius, a skillful architect, building a watch-tower for the King of Egypt, caused his own name to be engraved upon a stone in the wall in great letters, and afterwards covered it with lime and mortar, and upon the outside of that wrote the name of the King of Egypt in golden letters, as pretending that all was done for his honor and glory. But herein was his cunning: he very well knew that the dashing of the water would in a little while consume the plastering (as it did), and then his name and memory should abide to after generations. Thus there be many in this world who pretend to seek only the glory of God, the good of His church, and the happiness of the state, but if there were a window to look into their hearts we should find nothing there within but self-seeking.—J. Spencer.

814. Self-Sufficiency.

A certain alchemist who waited upon Leo X. declared that he had discovered how to transmute the baser metals into gold. He expected to receive a sum of money for his discovery, but Leo was not such a simpleton; he merely gave him a large purse in which to keep the gold he would make. There was wisdom as well as sarcasm in the present. That is precisely what God does with proud men; he lets them have the opportunity to do what they boasted of being able to do. I never heard that so much as a solitary gold piece was dropped into Leo's purse, and I am sure you will never be spiritually rich by what you can do in your own strength. Be stripped, brother, and then God may be pleased to clothe you with honour, but not till then.—C. H. Spurgeon.

815. Youthful Selfishness.

Once, when Socrates was asked what was the virtue of a young man, he said, "To avoid excess in everything." If this virtue were more common, how much happier the world would be. Before he died, Lord Northington, Chancellor in George III.'s reign, paid the penalty which port wine extracts from its fervent worshipers, and he suffered the acutest pangs of gout. It is recorded that as he limped from the Woolsack to the Bar of the House of Lords, he once muttered to a young peer who watched his distress with evident sympathy, "Ah, my young friend, if I had known that these legs would one day carry a Chancellor, I would have taken better care of them when I was at your age." He knew from bitter experience the pains and penalties of an ill-spent youth.—T. White.

816. Sowing Wild Oats.

A light - hearted lad passes through a wood, and thoughtlessly strikes a young oak sapling. The scar heals over, but when that tree is cut down a thousand years afterwards, that blow is written on its heart. As heedlessly he puts the first thought of impurity into the soul of another, innocent up to that moment; and, owing to that thought, perhaps, that soul is lost. "I've seen pretty clearly," says Adam Bede in George Eliot's story, "ever since I could cast up a sum, that you can never do what is wrong without breeding sin and trouble, more than you can ever see. It's like a bit of bad workmanship; you can never see the end of the mischief it will do."—E. J. Hardy.

817. Self-Deception.

Boswell relates that Dr. Johnson told him that when his father's workshop, which was a detached building, had partly fallen down for want of being repaired, he was no less diligent to lock the door every night, though he saw that anybody might walk in at the back. Even so do many persons, guarding themselves against one approach of sin only, while they are exposed to danger from some other point, vainly suppose themselves safe from their spiritual foes.—R. Brewin.

818. Tried to Save Himself.

On Sunday, March 6, 1881, a barque was wrecked off the north coast of Scotland. Fishermen on shore made several vain attempts to get a line on board by means of the rockets, but the wind was too strong. They succeeded at last, however, by using an empty barrel. There were eleven men on board, but only four or five were able to do anything, the remainder being helpless from the cold. As soon as the apparatus was in working order for the travelling cage, which was to be drawn along the rope, one young sailor was put into it, and a few minutes found him on shore in the hands of kind friends.

This first man was scarcely saved when, through the tide and the wind, the ship was swung round among the rocks, and the travelling apparatus becoming entangled across her bow, was rendered unmanageable.

Then we saw through the drifting snow a man descend from the vessel and try to save himself by coming along the rope hand over hand, but, alas, such an attempt was evidently useless. The waves were beating over him like falling houses, and the poor fellow had gone but a little distance from the ship when the heavy seas swept over him, and in a few seconds he dropped into the surging waves. A few moments after this, the bow of the ship lifted again over the rocks, and soon the apparatus was disentangled and again workable, and all of the others were safely brought to shore. We asked the captain about the lost man. He said, "We tried to persuade him not to attempt such a useless task, as it would be impossible for him to reach the shore in that way, but he would not listen to us. A fine fellow he was," added the captain, "the best man in the crew; but he was lost because he tried to save himself in his own way." Yes, all the rest were saved, but by other hands than their own.

Human powers are wholly inadequate for human needs. To rely upon them is to invite and insure spiritual disaster.

But divine resources are amply sufficient, and these divine resources—the power of an indwelling Christ—are ours for the taking.—J. H. Tremont, D.D.

819. Look Away from Yourselves for Peace.

Did you ever hear of a captain of a vessel driven about by rough winds who wanted anchorage and tried to find it on board his vessel? He desires to place his anchor somewhere on board the ship where it will prove a hold-fast. He hangs it at the prow, but still the ship drives; he exhibits the anchor upon deck, but that does not hold the vessel; at last he puts it down into the hold; but with no better success. Why, man alive, anchors do not hold as long as they are on board a ship. They must be thrown into the deep, and then they will get a grip of the sea-bottom and hold the vessel against wind and tide. As long as ever you have confidence in yourselves, you are like a man who keeps his anchor on board his boat, and you will never come to a resting-place. Over with your faith into the great deeps of eternal love and power, and trust in the infinitely faithful One. Then shall you be glad because your heart is quiet.—C. H. Spurgeon.

820. Late, but Not Lost.

I remember hearing of a young man who went to a minister of Christ in great distress about his spiritual state. He said to the minister, "Sir, can you tell me what I must do to find peace?" The minister replied, "Young man, you are too late." "Oh!" said the young man, "you don't mean to say I am too late to be saved?" "Oh, no," was the reply, "but you are too late to do anything. Jesus did everything that needed to be done twenty centuries ago."—The Wonderful Word.

821. Not of Works.

One day as Ah Koh, the Chinese postman in an inland city of China, handed out the letters to the missionary he bemoaned the feebleness of his advancing years, then remarked, "Oh, well, it will not be long before I am in my heavenly home!" "But, Ah Koh," remonstrated the missionary, "you have not accepted Christ; how can you expect to reach heaven?" The old man responded hopefully, "Surely, after I've brought letters to you all these years, one of you will get me in." Living with Christians, doing Christian service, may make it easier for one to accept Christ, but one is not a Christian until he has received Christ as his own Saviour. —Forward.

822. False Confidence.

Winstanley was so proud of the former Eddystone Lighthouse that, as he looked at its goodly proportions, he said, "I only wish that I was inside in a great storm." Proud boast to make, for he is inside, and the night lowers dark and chill, and there is a moan in the sea that tells of an unprecedented disturbance of the elements. Winstanley is inside. "Ah," he says, "I shall see how the good old work stands," and as the edifice rocks in the storm Winstanley thinks it is all right.

He is sitting there by the fireside, the wind roaring about him and the spray dashing up on the windows;

but in the grey dawn of the next morning they looked out from the mainland, and the lighthouse was gone. Winstanley was lost in the work of his own hands. His boast availed not; the storm was too big for the edifice. Oh, man, were it not an ordinary storm, I would say to you, "Settle down in your good works." Were it merely the little bit of tossing we have in this earthly life, I would say, "Build, build on your own strength; it will do you good"; but, man, the storm is supernatural.

The great roll of that sea will bring down every self-built lighthouse. Never did the earth see such a storm; never did such a torrent play on the human soul, as eternity; there was never such a cataclysm on our afflicted earth; stars falling, earth reeling like a drunken man. Your works will go by the board, as sure as God is on the throne. You cannot get to heaven by good works.—John Robertson.

SIN.

823. Original Sin.

A minister, having preached on the doctrine of original sin, was afterwards waited on by some persons who stated their objections to what he had advanced. After hearing them, he said, "I hope you do not deny actual sin, too?" "No," they replied. The good man expressed his satisfaction at their acknowledgment; but, to show the absurdity of their opinions in denying a doctrine so plainly taught in Scripture, he asked them, "Did you ever see a tree growing without a root?"—J. Caird.

824. One Sinner.

"A single soldier, finding his way into a garrison, may open the gates to the whole besieging army. One sin leads on to another and another, especially if the first be a sin which it is desirable to conceal. If there is a being on earth more to be pitied than another, it is the man who has got into this labyrinth."—Expositor's Bible.

825. Changing the Label.

A distinguished Methodist minister of the city of Adelaide, Australia, preached on sin, and one of his church officers afterwards came into his study to see him. He said to my friend, the minister, "Mr. Howard, we don't want you to talk as plainly as you do about sin, because if our boys and girls hear you talking so much about sin they will more easily become sinners. Call it a mistake if you will, but do not speak so plainly about sin." Then my friend took down a small bottle and showed it to the visitor. It was a bottle of strychnine and was marked, "Poison." Said he, "I see what you want me to do. You want me to change the label. Suppose I take off this label of 'Poison' and put on some mild label, such as 'Essence of Peppermint,' don't you see what happens? The milder you make your label, the more dangerous you make your poison."—J. Wilbur Chapman.

826. Remedy for Sin.

Near the manchaneel, which grows in the forests of the West Indies and which gives forth a juice of deadly poisonous nature, grows a fig, the sap of which, if applied in time, is a remedy for the diseases produced by the manchaneel. God places the gospel of grace alongside the sentence of death.—W. Adamson.

827. Horror of Smiting Jesus.

King Crœsus had a son who was dumb all his days until the siege of Sardis, when, seeing a Persian soldier rush to strike the king, this dumb son of his found his voice and cried, "Man, kill not Crœsus!" This burst of anguish broke the impediment, and he spoke for the first time in his life. As I enter into the spirit of the fact and seem to see a contemptible slave strike the face of Jesus, a fiery sting strikes my own face, I feel my heart burst, and my brow burn; it seems to me that had I been dumb, and a witness of this deed, I should have spoken out! So any Christian is ready to say.—C. Stanford, D.D.

828. Where Ruin Lurks.

About thirty years ago there stood, on the most splendid avenue of Newport, a palace built by one of the richest men of New York. It was said to be a copy of the Palazzo Doria in Venice. There were a Moorish room, a Chinese room, a gallery of pictures of the most famous of modern masters. It was a luxurious, beautiful home.

The owner took possession of it in May, and in July his only son died of a low, lingering fever. During the seven succeeding years the house was occupied by different tenants, but ill health or death visited each. It was found at last, after repeated, fruitless examinations, that an old drain existed under the foundations of the house, and that, unseen, it had been pouring death into the beautiful dwelling all these years. The walls were so impregnated with poison that the house, after remaining without a tenant for some time, was razed to the ground.

The lives of some men are like this dwelling. They have every fortunate circumstance which good birth, influence, wealth or education can give to make them strong, and noble, and helpful to other men; yet some foul trail, inherited or acquired, breathes poison and death through the whole life.

There is a marble bust of the boy Nero in the gallery of the Uffizi palace which shows him to have been "that noble child" of whom history tells us, affectionate, gay and kind; but the sensual lip hints of deadly poison already at work within, and it foretold the monster of history.

Physicians sometimes examine the blood of their patients and detect disease by the revelations of the microscope. Every one who is beginning his work in the world should search his heart, if, perchance, there may be in it a poisoned drop which may corrupt and ruin his life.—Youth's Companion.

829. Bossed by a Habit.

The Arabs have a fable of a miller who one day was startled by a camel's nose thrust in the window of the room where he was sleeping. "It is very cold outside," said the camel. "I only want to get my nose in." The nose was let in, then the neck and finally the whole body. Presently the miller began to be extremely inconvenienced by the ungainly companion he had obtained in a room certainly not large enough for both. "If you are inconvenienced, you may leave," said the camel; "as for myself, I shall stay where I am." There are many such camels knocking at the human heart.—C. H. Spurgeon.

830. Smokeless Powder.

One of the most notable inventions in the grim series that was supposed to be making war so terrible that it would be impossible was smokeless powder. The old-fashioned powder was in one way a merciful device. It raised a tremendous cloud, so that each set of combatants was speedily prevented from seeing the other set through a thick veil of its own making. A blessed halt was necessary ever and anon, till the wind blew the clouds away.

But smokeless powder prevented all that. It kept the air clear, so that our side (for instance), having located the enemy, could fire away at them quite indefinitely without obscuring their own vision. And the enemy would have no smoke whereby to discover our batteries.

Now, however, comes the discovery that the flash of smokeless powder may be discerned easily through red glass, while the other features of the landscape are dimmed thereby. The commanding officers have now merely to arm their field-glasses with red screens, and they can point out the sharpshooters before they have done much damage. Thus are inventions balanced by inventions.

I am not much interested in the literal question of smokeless powder. Some day, I hope, the world will relegate all such matters to the dark ages, of which they are the unworthy survivals. What I find of interest is the application of all this to the spiritual life.

For how often we think to use smokeless powder in our dealings with our fellow-men! We shoot out against our neighbors thoughts of envy, of covetousness, of malice, and we think that no one sees; there is no smoke from that fire. We pass along a bit of gossip or a piece of slander; but it is smokeless powder we are using, and we are safe. No one will discover us. The ball will speed on its deadly way. Happiness will be slain, fortunes will be battered down, reputations will be torn to pieces by a bursting shell. But no one will suspect us. No one will spy us out.

Ah, there is One to whose vision smokeless powder is as plainly marked as powder that comes out and declares itself openly! There is a captain on the field who knows all secrets, pierces all disguises, perceives all ambushes. There is no smokeless powder in the world of clear seeing where He dwells!—Amos R. Wells.

831. Pictures on the Wall.

When a bookcase standing long in one place was removed there was the exact image left on the wall of the whole, and many of its portions. But, in the midst of this picture was another, the precise outline of a map, which had hung on the wall before the bookcase was placed there. We had all forgotten everything about the map until we saw its photograph on the wall. Thus, some day or another, we may remember a sin which has been covered up, when this lower universe is pulled away from the wall of infinity, where the wrongdoing stands self-recorded.—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

832. Clinging to the Prison.

There is a man in the Ohio State Penitentiary at Columbus who has been there over thirty years. The crime for which he was imprisoned was committed when he was but a young man, only twenty-two years of age. He is now past middle life and looks like an old man. Nearly 25,000 prisoners have come and gone since he first went to his cell. For a long time he longed for freedom and dreamed of pardon, but the other day, when he was offered a release on parole, he declined it and said he preferred to end his days in the penitentiary. There are many men like that in regard to their sins. They have carried their chains so long that they cease to rebel against them and give themselves over to be "led captive by the devil at his will." It is a terrible thing to surrender one's self to the prison-house of sin, and thus run the risk of seeing the day when the freedom of a noble life will seem to be a thing to be shunned.—L. A. Banks.

833. Moral Obliquity.

Lord Byron was guilty of a foolish self-pity. He showed a mawkish sentimentality about the sins which he never ceased to love. He was pleased to think of himself as the unfortunate prey of fleshly lusts, while he gloried in his shame. Sometimes moral obliquity sinks so low that the sinner plumes himself on his insensibility. A man recently said that he would rather pay ten thousand dollars to retain his delicious thirst for alcoholic beverages, to which he was a slave, than to pay one hundred dollars for its removal. When a soul has dropped into that abyss of spiritual morbidity, he can scarcely hear the voice of God summoning him to liberty and life. Fénelon imagined a dialogue between Ulysses and Grillus, the man whom Circe had turned into a hog. Ulysses wished to bring him back to manhood. But Grillus would not consent. He said, "No, the life of a hog is so much pleasanter." "But," said Ulysses, "do you make no account of eloquence, poetry and music?" "No, I would rather grunt than be eloquent like you." "But," asked Ulysses further, "how can you endure this nastiness and stench?" Grillus replied, "It all depends on the taste; the odor is sweeter to me than that of amber, and the filth than the nectar of the gods."

It is a pertinent question for every spiritually impotent person—Do you sincerely wish to get well? —Rev. G. P. Eckman.

834. Destitute of Moral Principle.

Among the reminiscences of a political leader published by a Boston journal is one of a national convention of the party to which he belonged. He says that the first day's proceedings developed the fact that the balance of power in the nomination of a candidate for the Presidency would rest with the delegation from a certain State.

The delegates met in caucus at night with closed doors. In the discussion that ensued the name of a prominent man was urged, and was received with favour. Only one of the delegates, a judge of some eminence in the State, knew him personally, and he not intimately. He was asked for his opinion. In reply he said that he was at college with the prospective candidate, and he would relate one incident of college life. He did so, and it showed that the young man was in those days destitute of moral principle. The delegates were satisfied that, although brilliant, he was a man they could not trust, and they unanimously resolved to cast the votes of the State for his rival. The next day the vote was given, as decided, and the man to whom it was given was nominated and elected. Little did the young college man think, when he committed that escapade, that a score of years later it would be the sole cause of his missing one of the greatest prizes of earth—that of being the ruler of millions of people. But sin is always loss, and unless it is blotted out by the blood of Christ it will cause the sinner to lose the greatest prize attainable to a human being in the world beyond the grave—eternal life.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

835. Human Depravity.

I was at a conference held about the state of the people in Liverpool. It was a large conference, with the Mayor in the chair. They were conferring about why it was that so many of the working people particularly would not go to church or chapel, but would lie about on Sundays and seem to have nothing but an animal life. One man after another made a speech about it. You never heard such a number of reasons given: too hard work on Saturdays—which seemed to me to be a strange thing; or they had no place near them which suited them; or the preachers did not preach well enough; or the sermons were too long; or they did not like pews; or they did not get the best seats when they went to church; or pew-rents were required. You never heard such a number of reasons—the people that did not go to church were not to blame, it was always the people about the church, or in the church, who were to blame, till at last an old man got up (I think from his speech he was a Scotchman) and said, "Mr. Mayor, there is one reason that strikes me that I have not heard a word about yet"—they had spoken for an hour and a half—"I think it is the reason of the whole thing." We were all struck dumb to hear what that was. "What I have to say is that the most of it comes from human depravity."—D. Fraser, D.D.

836. Bad Homes.

(1) Mr. Kingsmill, in his "Prisons and Prisoners," gives the results of his inquiries as to the origin of the criminal courses of a large number of prisoners. Summing them up, we find that at least four out of five had their origin in bad homes or the want of homes. (2) The superintendent of the Providence, R. I., Reform School said that such was the case with nine-tenths of those who were sent to his institution. (3) Col. Gardner Tufts for ten years had the oversight of all the youth in Massachusetts, under 17, who were sentenced by the courts. Of the 20,000 thus brought under his charge, he told me that not more than one-tenth had any homes that could be called homes.—H. F. Sayles.

837. Soiled Garments.

"I think a Christian can go anywhere," said a young woman who was defending her continual attendance at some doubtful places of amusement. "Certainly she can," rejoined her friend, "but I am reminded of a little incident which happened last summer when I went with a party of friends to explore a coal mine. One of the young women appeared dressed in a dainty white gown. When her friends remonstrated with her, she appealed to the old miner who was to act as guide to the party. "Can't I wear a white dress down into the mine?" she asked petulantly. "Yes, mum," returned the old man, "there is nothing to keep you from wearing a white frock down there, but there will be considerable to keep you from wearing one back."
—L. A. Banks.

838. Substitutes for the Saviour.

Not long ago, in Piacenza, in Italy, the daughter of the principal notary was found, on a post-mortem examination, to have swallowed, on the advice of her father confessor, a large number of medals of a madonna, locally celebrated for powers of cure in cancer. We Protestants smile at such superstition. Having grown in intelligence, having broken loose from all trust in relics, we assume a superior air and look down with pity on our ignorant brethren of the Catholic Church. Then we turn about and fancy that people are better for having swallowed certain saving doctrines. We put our trust in a formula, an attitude, an act of baptism, a combination of words. It is only a more subtle form of the belief that relies on the efficacy of the prophet's staff, without the prophet's spirit.—Rev. George H. Ferris.

839. Sin in the Heart.

There once sailed from the city of Orleans a large and noble steamer, laden with cotton and having a great number of passengers on board. While they were taking in the cargo, a portion of it became slightly moistened by a shower of rain that was falling. This circumstance, however, was not noticed; the cotton was stowed away in the hold and the hatches fastened down. All went well at first, but one day an alarm of fire was made, and in a few moments the whole ship was enveloped in flames. The damp and closely packed bale of cotton had become heated, and it smouldered and got into a more dangerous state every day, until it burst forth into a large sheet of flame, and nothing could be done to "quench" it. Now, that heated cotton, smouldering in the hull of the vessel, is like sin in the heart. Do not let us think lightly of sin, speaking of little sins and big sins, white lies and black lies. Sin is sin in God's sight, and God hates sin.—N. Jones.

840. Laziness the Original Sin.

Dr. Storrs tells of an Indian who was a candidate for the ministry, and was asked before the Presbytery the important question, "What is original sin?" He answered that he didn't know what other people's might be, but he rather thought that his was laziness. There is no doubt at the present time that many are suffering from the same disease. Truly, he is to be pitied who has nothing to do. He is like a barnacle on a ship, or a floating derelict, useless to himself and dangerous to others.—Rev. E. W. Caswell.

841. Ruinous Effects of Sin.

It is just like what happens sometimes in a forest. On a calm day, when all else is silent, something crashes heavily through the branches, and we know a tree has fallen. No axe was lifted, no white lightning streamed, there was only a passing breeze. The wind that did but gently sway the little flower shook down that towering tree, because long before the catastrophe its vital progress had been disturbed, and millions of foul insects had entered it, which, leaving its bark untouched, and its boughs unshorn of their glory, had slowly, silently, withered its strong fibres and hollowed its core.—C. Stanford.

842. Holding on to a Sin.

A little child was one day playing with a very valuable vase, when he put his hand into it and could not withdraw it. His father, too, tried his best to get it out, but all in vain. They were talking of breaking the vase when the father said, "Now, my son, make one more try; open your hand and hold your fingers out straight, as you see me doing, and then pull." To their astonishment the little fellow said, "Oh, no, pa; I couldn't put out my fingers like that, for if I did I would drop my penny."

He had been holding on to a penny all the time! No wonder he could not withdraw his hand. How many of us are like him? Drop the copper; surrender, let go, and God will give you gold.—John MacNeil.

843. Danger of Sin.

Captain Scott, in "The Voyage of the Discovery," tells of the immense care that was taken by the magnetic experts on board to banish all iron and steel from the vicinity of the magnetic observatory. Everything within thirty feet of the observatory had to be made of brass, lead, hemp or some other non-magnetic material. These regulations secured the accuracy of the magnetic observations. But the motions of the heart are most disturbed by a bit of gold anywhere in its neighborhood. The thought of gain seems to deflect the whole delicate machinery of the moral sense.—W. L. Watkinson.

844. A Chain of His Own Making.

It is told of a famous smith of medieval times that, having been taken prisoner and immured in a dungeon, he began to examine the chain that bound him, with a view to discover some flaw that might make it easier to be broken. His hope was vain, for he found, from marks upon it, that it was of his own workmanship, and it had been his boast that none could break a chain that he had forged. Thus with the sinner; his own hands have forged the chain that binds him, a chain which no human hand can break.—The Sunday School Chronicle.

845. Beauty of Poison.

In the "Life of Frank Buckland," it is told how the genial naturalist resolved to make a special study of snakes. He engaged a professional viper-catcher to collect some for him. The biggest viper in the catch was held securely by Buckland. Then he got a glass slide out of the microscope and placed it in the serpent's mouth. "In an instant both fangs struck down upon it. Upon taking the glass from its jaws, I was delighted to observe two drops of perfectly clear translucent fluid resting upon it. I placed these drops under the microscope and then saw a wondrous sight. On a sudden, a crystal-like fiber shot across the field of vision, and then another and another, these slender lines crossing each other at various angles, reminding me of the general appearance of an aurora borealis, or of delicate frost crystals on a window when there has been a sharp touch of frost." What a wonderful thing it is that all the beauties of the aurora should be hidden in the venom of the viper! So sin often presents itself in delightful and attractive colors.—Sunday At Home.

846. Small Beginnings.

I was in the offices of the Southern Pacific Railroad in San Francisco when the General Passenger Agent asked me if I had seen the big trees of California. I informed him that I had seen them as I looked from the car window the day before, and, smiling, he said, "Then you have not seen them, for they must be studied to be appreciated." Calling for his secretary, he stretched out before me a measuring line. On the one side was his affidavit in which he said, "I have measured one of the big trees of California. Its circumference is 105 feet, its diameter 35 feet, and the height was to me so amazing that I hesitate here even to suggest it." Then he said to me, "How large would you think the seed of a big tree might be?" and when I suggested that it ought to be of enormous size, he poured out into the palm of his hand a number of these little seeds, and they were smaller than a lettuce seed. So it is with sin. An evil imagination encouraged, an impure thought harbored, an unholy ambition controlling us, and the work is begun, but the end no human tongue is able to describe.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

847. Little Things.

A big steamer went upon the rocks and was totally wrecked. No storm was prevailing at the time, and the wonder was that the captain, who was a skilled and experienced officer, would have been careless enough to let his boat go so far from the course. No one was more surprised than the captain, who could find no way in which to explain the accident, until it occurred to him to examine the compass. He found in the box something that looked like the point of a steel knife blade. The day before, in trying to remove a spot of rust, while cleaning the compass, a sailor had broken off a bit of the point of the blade of his knife. This bit was not a quarter of an inch long; but, by drawing the needle far enough away from its true direction to mislead the man at the wheel, it wrecked a vessel that was three hundred feet long. The knife that was broken was not worth fifty cents, but it destroyed a vessel worth $500,000.

Like this bit of steel, drawing the magnetic needle away from its proper pointing with such momentous results, is many a word and deed uttered or performed, perhaps thoughtlessly, with no evil intent, but the influence of which, ever increasing in power, wrecks lives, maybe, and dashes souls upon the rocks of eternal woe! How solemn is life! Made up of little things which are the turning points in our lives, or the lives of others, at the parting of the ways.—Herald and Presbyter.

848. Living Tomb.

Workmen removing a cellar wall under a dilapidated building in Vermont not long ago unearthed evidence which solves a murder mystery of seventy years since. The discovery was made by accident, the laborers having fallen into a pit while trying to lift some heavy stones. The pit was about eight feet deep, with a stone wall surrounding it. In the center of the pit was an iron post with a heavy iron chain and a pair of handcuffs attached. Near by was a heap of human bones. Inquiry disclosed the fact that in 1831 Perry Borden, a young Frenchman, brought his wife to Poultney to live in the house which the workmen were tearing down. Borden became jealous and forbade her visiting a certain tavern near by. One night her husband found her there. She left the place with him and was never seen again. Borden said his wife had deserted him and fled to Canada. After a year Borden went away and was not heard of again until 1882, when he suddenly reappeared. He said he had been at sea for fifty years. His mind seemed shattered. He went to the little house and remained two years, neighbors supplying him with provisions. He died in 1887 and was buried in Potter's Field. Every one in the community believes Borden chained his wife in the cellar and left her to die a horrible death. There are many men who do not murder their wives or children, so far as taking the life of the body is concerned, who nevertheless seal them up in a living tomb through their selfishness and unkindness, which represses the natural hopefulness and courage of the heart. One of the saddest things in human life is to note the repressed lives, where every green bough that would run over the wall in gladness is forced back and given no chance to grow.—L. A. Banks.

849. Falling of a Giant.

A traveler describes in a very interesting way the impression received by one who is present at the felling of a giant redwood tree. He says as the saw moves through the heart of the giant it begins to sag down on the side where the wound is gaping. Presently it is apparent that the tree is beginning to lean away from the cutters. They continue their work a moment longer, then is heard the cracking of the wood fibres in front of the saw teeth. Another swish of the saw and the noises increase. They give a report like firing pistols and the rapidity of detonation of a Gatling gun. The sounds, getting ever more rapid, presently become a continuous roar. Then, if you are standing near by, and the tree is large, you will get the impression that everything above is coming to earth; that the whole forest is falling. The great mass starts slowly to topple, crackling and exploding ever louder at its base, until with a fearful momentum it comes sprawling down, cracking and crashing and roaring, and hitting the earth with a thump as if a whole broadside of shells had simultaneously struck a bastion. Sometimes we see a man come down like that. He has stood out apparently strong and forceful before all the world; he has carried his head high and young men have envied him; but the sappers were at his heart. The deadly saw of appetite or lust or passion cut away the supports under him until he came crashing down to the ground.—L. A. Banks.

850. God Sees the Sinner.

In the old time, when the Grecians worshipped images of their gods, it was said that when spiders stretched their webs across the eyelids of the image of Jupiter, the people were regular in their attendance to worship him. They liked to feel that the spiders' webs prevented Jupiter from seeing their sins, and in their poor, feeble way were, no doubt, grateful to the insects for covering the eyes of a god who, they thought, would punish them for their sins if he could see their ways.—W. Birch.

851. No Secrecy for Sin.

A man broke into a small church in Scotland with the sacrilegious intention of stealing the communion plate. Hearing steps outside the building and expecting that he should be discovered, he hurried to the end of the church, where, seeing a rope depending to the ground, he laid hold of it for the purpose of climbing out of sight. But it proved to be the bell-rope, and his weight rang the bell, which attracted his pursuers immediately to the spot. The man, of course, was caught; and thus wittily addressed the unconscious cause of his detection: "If it had not been for thy long tongue and empty head, I should not have been in my present predicament." This is the story as we get it from Mr. Gatty's book upon "The Bell"; but it has its lesson. Those who sin are pretty sure, sooner or later, to turn king's evidence against themselves. There is a voice in wrong-doing; its long tongue will not always be quiet. All unaware, the offender puts out his hand and pulls the bell which tells against himself and summons vengeance to overtake him. Let no man dream that he can secure secrecy for his wickedness. Every timber in floor and roof is ready to cry out against him, and before he is aware of it, he himself will be ringing out his own infamy. What will be his dismay when he stands self-convicted before the assembled universe?—C. H. Spurgeon.

852. Marks of Sin.

There is no incident that more forcefully illustrates this than that connected with the painting of Leonardo Da Vinci's great masterpiece, "The Last Supper." Long and in vain had the artist sought for a model for his Christ. "I must find a young man of pure life," he declared, "before I can get that look on the face I want." At length his attention was called to a young man who sang in the choir of one of the old churches of Rome, Pietro Bandinelli by name. He was not only a young man of beautiful countenance, but his life was as beautiful as his face. The moment he looked upon this pure, sweet countenance the artist cried out in joy, "At last I have found the face I wanted." So Pietro Bandinelli sat as the model for his picture of Christ.

Years passed on, and still the great painting, "The Last Supper," was not finished. The eleven faithful apostles had all been sketched on the canvas, and the artist was hunting for a model for his Judas. "I must find a man whose face has hardened and distorted," he said, "a debased man, his features stamped with the ravages only wicked living and a wicked heart can show." Thus he wandered long in search of his Judas, until one day in the streets of Rome he came upon a wretched creature, a beggar in rags, with a face of such hard, villainous stamp that even the artist was repulsed. But he knew that at last he had found his Judas. So it came about that the beggar with the repulsive countenance sat as the model for Judas. As he was dismissing him, Da Vinci said, "I have not yet asked your name, but I will now." "Pietro Bandinelli," replied the man, looking at him unflinchingly. "I also sat to you as the model for your Christ."

Astonished, overwhelmed by this startling declaration, Da Vinci would not at first believe it, but the proof was at hand, and he had finally to admit that Pietro Bandinelli, he whose fair, sweet face had been the inspiration for his great masterpiece, the face of Christ, had now become so disfigured by the sins of a lifetime that no trace was left of that marvellous beauty which before had been the admiration of men.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

853. Sin Its Own Detective.

One night in Edinburgh a person awoke to find that his house had been plundered. The alarm was raised, nor was it long ere the officers of justice found a clue. The thief, wounding his hand as he escaped by the window, had left a red witness behind him. The watchman flashed his lantern upon the spot. Drop by drop the blood stained the pavement. They tracked it on and on and ever on, till their silent guide conducted them along an open passage and up a flight of stairs, stopping at the door of a house. They broke in, and there they found the bleeding hand, the booty and the pale criminal. And so, unless they be forgiven, washed away in the blood of Jesus, shall your sins find you out. —T. Guthrie, D.D.

854. Sin's Tongue.

Two brothers started to go West to seek their fortunes. One had money, the other had not. When they got to the frontier, the one without money murdered the other and, taking his money, fled to California. Doctors took the head of the murdered man and preserved it in alcohol. No proof of the murder could be found. No one was present when the deed was done. The brother was accused, but declared his innocence. No one was there but he and God. He was brought before jury and judge and declared his innocence. The dead face of his brother was brought into court. He gazed at it, he fainted and fell to the floor, and confessed his sin. There is a time when all these unconfessed sins will come in before us, tramp, tramp, till they all come back.—T. De Witt Talmage.

855. Sin in the Heart.

A large oak-tree was recently felled in the grove adjoining Avondale, near the centre of which was found a small nail, surrounded by twenty-nine cortical circles, the growth of as many years. The sap, in its annual ascents and descents, had carried with it the oxides from the metal, till a space of some three or four feet in length, and four or five inches in diameter, was completely blackened. Is not this a striking illustration of sin as it exists in the hearts of many sincere Christians? The nail did not kill the tree; it did not prevent growth; it did not destroy its form and beauty to the eye of the casual observer; but year after year it was silently spreading its influence in the interior of the tree. So, after a believer has been justified by faith in a crucified Saviour, he is made conscious of inherent evil. He may be sensible of pride, envy, ambition, worldly desires, impatience, anger and unbelief. Should he fail to apply for deliverance to the all-cleansing blood of Jesus, such inherent evils will remain, year after year, corroding and corrupting the seat of his affection and desires. His outward profession may be steady and consistent. His religious life may be continued. There may be growth in religious knowledge and increased fixedness in religious habits. And yet sin, though hidden, may be percolating through his thoughts, and at the end of thirty, forty or fifty years he may still be sensible that his nature is not thoroughly renewed. —T. Brackenbury.

856. False Pretences.

Drummond writes of the African white ant: "One may never see the insect, possibly, in the flesh, for it lives underground; but its ravages confront one at every turn. You build your house, perhaps, and for a few months fancy you have pitched upon the one solitary site in the country where there are no white ants. But one day suddenly the door-post totters, and lintel and rafters come down together with a crash. You look at a section of the wrecked timbers, and discover that the whole inside is eaten clean away. The apparently solid logs of which the rest of the house is built are now mere cylinders of bark, and through the thickest of them you could push your little finger." Many influences act on Christian character much as these secret pests act upon the beams of houses. Secret sins silently eat out the pith of the Christian life, and yet everything remains the same to the eye. The heart, core, and fibre of the Christian character and life perished piecemeal, yet the hollow thing keeps up its old aspect and credit. —W. L. Watkinson.

857. Horror of Sin.

Suppose a man should come to a table and there is a knife laid at his trencher, and it should be told him: "This is the knife that cut the throat of your child, or your father"; if he could now use that knife as any other knife, would not one say, "Surely there was but little love either to the father or to the child?" So, when there is a temptation to any sin, this is the knife that cut the throat of Christ, that pierced His side, that was the cause of His sufferings, that made Christ to be a curse. Now, wilt thou not look on that as a cursed thing that made Christ to be a curse? Oh, with what detestation would a man or a woman fling away such a knife! And with the like detestation it is required that a man should renounce sin; for that, and that only, was the cause of the death of Christ.—Alphonsus ab Avendano.

858. Liberty of Sin.

Some of you have visited the Castle of Chillon on the Lake of Geneva. In that castle is a dungeon containing a well, at the bottom of which you discern the waters of the lake. That shaft is called the way of liberty. Tradition says that in the old days the perfidious jailer in the darkness of the dungeon would whisper to the prisoner, "Three steps and liberty," and the poor dupe, hastily stepping forward, fell down this shaft, thickly planted with knives and spikes: the mutilated bloody corpse dropping into the lake. That is precisely the liberty of sin. The dupe of temptation, taking a leap in the dark, is forthwith pierced with many sorrows and, sooner or later, mangled and bleeding, disappears in the gulf. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." —W. L. Watkinson.

859. Wages of Sin.

A certain tyrant sent for one of his subjects and said, "What is your employment?" He said, "I am a blacksmith." "Go home and make a chain of such a length." He went home; it occupied him several months; and he had no wages all the time he was making it. When he brought it to the monarch he said, "Go and make it twice as long." He brought it again and the monarch said, "Go and make it longer still." Each time he brought it there was nothing but the command to make it longer still; and when he brought it at last, the monarch said, "Take it and bind him hand and foot with it, and cast him into a furnace of fire." These were the wages of making the chain. Here is a meditation for you, ye servants of the devil. Your master, the devil, is telling you to make a chain. Some have been fifty years in welding the chain; and he says: "Go and make it still longer." Next Sabbath morning you will open that shop of yours, and put another link on; next Sabbath you will be drunk and put on another link; next Monday you will do a dishonest action; and so you will go on making fresh links to this chain; and when you have lived twenty more years, the devil will say: "More links on still." And then at last it will be: "Take him and bind him hand and foot and cast him into a furnace of fire." "For the wages of sin is death."—C. H. Spurgeon.

860. Secure in Sin.

"A Swiss traveller," says the *Edinburgh Review*, "describes a village situated on the slope of a great mountain, of which the strata shelve in the direction of the place. Huge crags directly overhanging the village, and massy enough to sweep the whole of it into the torrent below, have become separated from the main body of the mountain in the course of ages by great fissures, and now scarce adhere to it. When they give way, the village must perish; it is only a question of time, and the catastrophe may happen any day. For years past engineers have been sent to measure the fissures, and report them constantly increasing. The villagers, for more than one generation, have been aware of their danger; subscriptions have been once or twice opened to enable them to remove; yet they live on in their doomed dwellings, from year to year, fortified against the ultimate certainty and daily probability of destruction by the common sentiment, "Things may last their time and longer." Like the dwellers in this doomed village, the world's inhabitants have grown careless and secure in sin. The scoffers of the last days are around us, saying: "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers have fallen asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But in saying this, they are too confident. Nothing is permanent that has sin about it, nothing secure that has wrath above it, and flames of fire beneath it. Sin has once deluged the world with water, it shall deluge it again with waves of fire. Sodom and Gomorrah are the types that foreshadow the doom of those who live ungodly in these latter times, and he who can walk this reeling world unmoved by all the tokens of its fiery doom, must either have a rock of refuge where his soul may rest secure, or else must have fallen into a strange carelessness, and a sad forgetfulness of God.—J. W. Hardman.

861. Curse of Concealed Sin.

Those people in India, in the last plague, gave no end of trouble to the sanitary authorities because they would hide away the corpses in the backs of their hovels, and when the dead-cart came round said that there were no dead in the house; and so the corpse remained to poison the atmosphere and kill some more of them. If we keep our sins huddled up in the back premises of our natures and try to put a screen between them and God by impenitence and locking our lips against confession, then God cannot cast out the sins that we cling to, and will keep. But if we go to Him and say, "See if there be any wicked way in me. Come into the very innermost recesses of my soul, and whatsoever is there smite with Thy searching light," which, like the old Greek legend of the arrows of Apollo, will slay the pythons, then God will answer the petitions, and we shall be delivered.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

862. Cancer of the Soul.

Sin is likened unto a cancer on the soul. I took up a newspaper some months ago and read that Senator Benjamin H. Hill, our brilliant, brainy statesman of Georgia, had a little trouble on the tongue. They made light of it and said it was caused by a fractured tooth. A few days after that, in reading a daily paper, I saw that Senator Hill had been under the surgeon's knife, and they had removed one-third of his tongue, and the doctors had said to him: "This wound will heal and you will be all right in a few days." In a few weeks I saw again that Senator Hill was back under the surgeon's knife in Philadelphia, and the doctors had cut out the glands from his face and neck. The paper told how young Benjamin Hill had turned to the doctors and said: "Will my father get well?" The surgeons replied guardedly: "If we have extracted the last particle of virus of this cancer from his system, he will certainly get well. But if there is the least particle of cancer germ left in his system it will appear in some other gland and this trouble will be renewed." The next I heard of Senator Hill was, that he was at some famous springs in the West. Some weeks afterwards I walked down to the depot in my home town, and when the passenger train rolled into the city, trembling under her air brakes, and stopped, I looked toward the window in the sleeping-car, and thought I saw the outlines of Senator Hill's face. I walked down to the car, and he pushed his bony hand out of the window and took mine, and I looked into his face, and said to myself, "O my Lord! Is this all that is left of Senator Benjamin H. Hill, one of the grandest men Georgia has ever produced?"

A few days afterward I read in the Atlanta *Constitution,* "The grandest procession that ever marched out of Atlanta marched out yesterday, and buried Senator Benjamin H. Hill out of the sight of men forever."

I want to tell you, just as certain as the virus of cancer killed Senator Hill's body, just so certain does the virus of sin kill your soul at last. It isn't a question of how you have been baptized. It isn't a question of what church you belong to. The only question for time and eternity with every mortal man is this: "Has this virus of sin been extracted from my soul?"—Sam Jones.

863. Hidden Sin.

You have heard of the white ant that commits such terrible devastations in wooden buildings in some portions of the globe. That little insect will insert itself into the largest wooden structure that men can put up, and in course of time it will eat away the whole of it, leaving nothing but the thinnest outer shell; the building will look as if nothing had befallen it; the shape will be unaltered; but put your finger upon it, or bring the slightest pressure to bear upon it, and you will find that it is no longer solid, but a hollow and useless outline. Is there not a more terrible power that enters into the inner nature of man, and utterly consumes all that is strong and noble and beautiful in his soul?—Joseph Parker.

864. Awful Evil of Sin.

Oh, sirs, if I had a dear brother who had been murdered, what would you think of me if I valued the knife which had been crimsoned with his blood? If I made a friend of the murderer, and daily consorted with the assassin, who drove the dagger into my brother's heart? Surely I, too, must be an accomplice in the crime! Sin murdered Christ; will you be a friend to it? Sin pierced the heart of the incarnate God; can you love it? Oh, that there was an abyss as deep as Christ's misery, that I might at once hurl this dagger of sin into its depths, whence it might never be brought to light again! Begone, O sin!

—C. H. Spurgeon.

865. Hardened Sinner.

Angelo Mario, a Jesuit librarian at the Vatican, made the discovery, many years ago, that some of the ancient MSS. had more than one layer of writing upon them. By certain chemical experiments, he succeeded in making legible the ancient writing. Archbishop Whately has suggested the theory, now generally admitted, that this was done on account of the expensiveness or scarcity of parchment in the Middle Ages. De Quincey, in his "Confessions," has given us a chapter on the subject, applying it to signify different layers of thought and emotion that have at different times passed upon the heart, and become apparently covered over completely with some other. So it is with the hardened sinner. How many a layer of conviction after conviction and partial reformations has he known, yet still how thick a case covers his hardened heart!—C. H. Spurgeon.

866. Penance for Sin.

"When James IV of Scotland was a boy, he stood in arms against his father. All his manhood was one long bitter penance for that sin. In memory of it he wore under his robes an iron belt, and to that belt he added every year a new link, that his repentance might be heavier every year of his life."—F. W. Farrar.

867. Lure of Sin.

During the last year or two there has been an extraordinary number of Alpine accidents, and in several instances they arose from a disregard of the danger of a grass slope. The inexperienced mountaineer thinks that a grass slope must be safe, and setting his foot on the inviting green discovers that it is every bit as dangerous as the ice, if it be steep and terminate in a precipice. The short Alpine grass is remarkably slippery, and many a tourist who has traveled over rock and glacier has fallen a victim to the treacherous slope where the verdant patch and mountain flower tempt the climber. We are comparatively safe when a thing is nakedly evil and the situation confessedly dangerous, but the green slope lures us to our doom.—W. L. Watkinson.

868. Opiate of Sin.

In our state we had a Mr. William A. Rogers, president of the Marietta Female College. One morning his wife was indisposed and he sent his servant to the drug store for quinine. In a few moments the servant returned with the medicine. Mrs. Rogers took the powder and put it on her tongue. She rinsed it down with water, but as soon as she had swallowed it she walked to the front porch, and to her husband, who was in the flower-yard, she said: "Husband, that was not quinine I took just now. I sent for quinine, but I am satisfied that was not quinine." Mr. Rogers ran down with all his might to the drug store, and said: "What was that you sent my wife?" The druggist threw up his hands and said: "Sir, I have sent enough morphine to your house to kill a dozen persons." Mr. Rogers ran over to the doctor's office and brought two physicians home with him. They administered emetics and strong coffee and various remedies, but directly a deathlike stupor began to crawl over her frame. The agonized husband turned to the doctors and said: "Is there any chance to save my poor wife?" "Yes," they replied, "if we can keep her awake for four hours we can save her life." The minutes seemed like hours, as they walked her up and down the floor, and threw cold water in her face, and whipped her person with cruel switches, and every means was used. That deathlike stupor became so oppressive that she turned to her husband and said: "Husband, please let me go to sleep"; and he said: "Oh, wife, if you go to sleep you will never wake in this world." "I know that," she said, "but please let me go to sleep." They walked her up and down the floor, and soon, when the stupor overwhelmed her whole being, she turned to her husband and said: "Husband, please let me sleep for just five minutes." And he said: "Wife, if you go to sleep for five minutes, you will never wake up. Arouse! Arouse!" Thus they persevered until the four hours had passed, and the doctors had pronounced her safe. I have seen the soul of man in just that condition. I have worked with him, prayed with him and wrestled with him day after day and week after week; and the devil would administer opiates to his soul, and he would say: "Just let me sleep until this service is over—just let me sleep through this." Oh, brother, how men sleep over their immortal interests!—Sam Jones.

869. God's Love for Sinners.

I remember the case of a young man who was afflicted with a frightfully loathsome disease. He had to be kept out of sight. But was he neglected? No. I need not tell you who looked after him. There was not a morning but his loving mother bathed his wounds and swathed his limbs, and not an evening that she wearied in her toil. Do you think she had not natural sensitiveness? I knew her to be as sensitive as any lady, but by so much more as she felt the loathsomeness of her work, do you see the love that constantly upheld her in doing it? But oh! what is the loathsomeness of cankered wounds compared with the loathsomeness of sin to God? There is but one thing that God hates, and that is sin. Yet with all His hatred of sin how He hangs over the Sinner!—S. Coley.

870. Curse of Sin.

There is not one evil that sin has not brought me.
There is not one good that has come in its train;
It hath cursed me through life, and its sorrows have sought me.
Each day that went by, in want, sickness, or pain.
And then when this life of affliction is ended,
What a home for my weary heart did it prepare?

The anger of Him whom my sins
had offended,
And the night, the sick night, of
eternal despair.
—F. W. Faber.

871. Secret Sin.

It is not what my hands have done
That weighs my spirit down,
That casts a shadow o'er the sun
And over earth a frown.
It is not any heinous guilt
Or vice by men abhorred;
For fair the fame that I have built,
A fair fame's just reward;
And men would wonder if they
knew
How sad I feel, with sins so few.

Alas, they only see a part
And thus they judge the whole;
They cannot look upon the heart,
They cannot read the soul;
But I survey myself within
And mournfully I feel
How deep the principle of sin
Its roots may there conceal,
And spread its poison through the
frame
Without a deed that man can
blame.
—Henry Ware.

SOUL—ITS VALUE.

872. Importance of One Conversion.

It is impossible to overrate the importance of the conversion of one soul to Christ, or of the hardening of one heart in sin. . . . An old Puritan doctor writes a book more than two hundred years ago, called "The Bruised Reed," which falls into the hands of Richard Baxter, and leads his penitent spirit to its trust in Christ. Baxter's ministry is like that of a giant in its strength, and when he dies his "Call to the Unconverted" goes preaching on to thousands to whom Baxter himself had never spoken with human tongue. Philip Doddridge, prepared by his pious mother's teaching, hears this piercing "Call," devotes the summer of his life to God, and becomes a "burning and a shining light." Doddridge's "Rise and Progress" fell into the hands of Wilberforce, and led him to thought and prayer. Wilberforce's "Practical View" cleared the faith and fired the zeal of a clergyman in the sunny South, and he wrote the simple annal of a Methodist girl, which has borne fruit of blessing in every quarter of the globe; for who has not heard of Leigh Richmond and "The Dairyman's Daughter"? And then the same book had a ministry in the bleak North, and in a country parish found out a Scotch clergyman who was preaching a gospel which he did not know, and he embraced the fulness of the glad tidings, and came forth a champion for the truth, "furnished in all things and ready," until all Scotland rang with the eloquence of Thomas Chalmers.—W. M. Punshon, D.D.

873. Saved by a Match.

I was crossing the Atlantic a short time ago, and one night I and some of the passengers were talking to the captain, when he told us of an incident that had occurred to him in that neighborhood some years previously. He was in command of a vessel, which had got thus far on her voyage, when the screw broke, and the engineer withdrew the shaft with the intention of repairing it; but the water rushed in through the hole, the bulkhead was not closed in time, and in a few minutes the ship began to sink. The boats were got out, the captain stepping into one laden to the gunwale; the night was dark, and the sea so rough that it seemed impossible for the boat to live. After a while they saw the lights of an approaching steamer; but how could they signal it? They made search in the boat, and found a battered lantern with an inch or two of candle in it; then they tried to find a match; every man felt in his pockets; but in vain; not a match was to be found. The captain bade them search again, and at last out of some corner one match was produced. The man who found it handed it to the mate; the mate passed it to another officer, and he gave it to the captain, the sailors clustering round him holding out their jackets to keep off the wind, and watching him with anxiety. The captain said he had faced many a difficulty and danger, but had never felt such responsibility as at that moment, when he had to strike the match; but he did it. The lantern was lighted, and when it was waved to and fro the ship saw the signal, altered its course, and picked them up. Now, what gave such value to that match? It was the only one; and your life is your only one—if misdirected and lost, you have no other in which to remedy the error. —Henry Drummond.

874. Planting the Vineyard.

"Go to the old burying-ground of Northampton, Mass., and look upon the early grave of David Brainerd, side by side with that of the fair Jerusha Edwards, whom he loved but did not live to wed. What hopes, what expectations for Christ's cause went down to the grave with the wasted form of that young missionary, of whose work nothing now remained but the dear memory, and a few score of swarthy Indian converts! But that majestic old Puritan saint, Jonathan Edwards, who had hoped to call him his son, gathered up the memorials of his life in a little book, and the little book took wings and flew beyond the sea, and alighted on the table of a Cambridge student, Henry Martyn. Poor Martyn! Why would he throw himself away, with all his scholarship, his genius, his opportunities? What had he accomplished when he turned homeward from "India's coral strand," broken in health, and dragged himself northward as far as that dreary khan at Tocat by the Black Sea, where he crouched under the piled-up saddles, to cool his burning fever against the earth, and there died alone? To what purpose was this waste? Out of that early grave of Brainerd, and that lonely grave of Martyn far away by the plashing of the Euxine Sea, has sprung up the noble army of modern missionaries."—Leonard W. Bacon.

875. Star in His Crown.

It had been a dull year in the church where Moffat was converted. The deacons finally said to the pastor: "We love you, pastor, but don't you think you had better resign? There hasn't been a convert this year." "Yes," he replied, "it has been a dull year—sadly dull to me. Yet I mind me that one did come, wee Bobby Moffat. But he is so wee a bairn that I suppose it is not right to count him." A few years later Bobby came to the pastor and said: "Pastor, do you think that I could ever learn to preach? I feel within here something that tells me that I ought to. If I could just lead souls to Christ, that would be happiness to me." The pastor answered, "Well, Bobby, you might; who knows? At least you can try!" He did try, and years later when Robert Moffat came back from his wonder work in Africa the King of England rose and uncovered in his presence, and the British Parliament stood as a mark of respect. The humble old preacher, who had but one convert, and who was so discouraged, is dead and forgotten, and yet that was the greatest year's work he ever did—and few have equalled it. —Young People's Weekly.

876. Three More Saved.

A few days after the wreck of the ill-fated steamer *Central America,* which sent hundreds to a watery grave, and plunged the American nation in grief, a pilot-boat was seen, on a fair breezy morning, standing up the Bay of New York. The very appearance of the vessel gave token that she was freighted with tidings of no common interest. With every sail set, and streamers flying, she leaped along the waters as if buoyant with some great joy, while the glad winds that swelled her canvas, and the sparkling waves that kissed her sides and urged her on her way, seemed to laugh with conscious delight. As she drew nearer, an unusual excitement was visible on her deck, and her captain, running out to the extreme end of her bowsprit, and swinging his cap, appeared to be shouting something with intense earnestness and animation. At first the distance prevented his being distinctly understood. But soon, as the vessel came farther into the harbour, the words, "Three more saved! Three more saved!" reached the nearest listeners. They were caught up by the crews of the multitudinous ships that lay anchored around, and sailors sprang wildly into the rigging and shouted, "Three more saved!" They were heard on the wharfs, and the porter threw down his load, and the drayman stopped his noisy cart, and shouted: "Three more saved!" The tidings ran along the streets, and the newsboys left off crying the latest intelligence, and shouted: "Three more saved!" Busy salesmen dropped their goods, bookkeepers their pens, bankers their discounts, tellers their gold, and merchants, hurrying on the stroke of the last hour of grace to pay their notes, paused in their headlong haste, and shouted: "Three more saved!"—New Cyclopedia of Illustrated Anecdotes.

877. All Saved but One.

A terrible storm swept the Atlantic and hurled the billows upon the coast of England and a ship was thrown on the rocks. The night fell dark and lowering. The storm rose higher as the night deepened. Fires were kindled all along the shore, if by any means to help those who were needing help. The lifeboat was manned. Out through the breakers and into the storm they went to the rescue. By and by they came back with all on board save one man; and John Holden, who stood upon the shore, cried: "Have you all the ship's company?" They answered, "All but one man." "Why did you not get him?" "Well, our strength was well-nigh gone, and if we had tarried long enough to rescue him we all should have been engulfed in the pitiless sea." Then John Holden said: "These men who have been to the rescue are well-nigh exhausted. Who is there who will go with me to rescue the one man?" and six sturdy fellows came promptly forward. Then John Holden's mother threw her arms about his neck and said, "John, don't you go! Your father was swallowed up by the angry ocean, and your brother William two years ago went out upon the sea, and I fear that he is lost, too, for we have not heard of him since. You are the stay of my life and my only dependence. Who will care for me if the sea swallows you also?" Then John Holden, with his firm, strong grasp, took those arms in which he had reposed in innocent infancy and removed them from his neck; and then he said, as he gently pushed his mother aside: "There is a man there drowning, and I must go, mother. If the sea should swallow me, God will take care of you; I'm sure He will." Kissing her furrowed cheek, he turned and stepped into the lifeboat which was already manned. They pushed out into the breakers and to the wreck. They found the man still clinging to the rigging, and, getting him into the boat, they pulled back to the shore. As the boat neared the shore, some one shouted, "Have you found the man?" "Yes," answered John Holden, "and rescued him; and say to my mother that he is my brother William!"—Rev. William M. Curry, D.D.

878. Value of the Soul.

During the World's Fair in Chicago there was one place in the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building—in the Tiffany exhibit—that one could never approach, day or night, when the building was open because of the great crowd gathered around it. I was there time and time and time again, but never could I get at the place; I always had to stand on tiptoe and look over the heads of the crowd. What were they looking at? Nothing but a cone of purple velvet revolving upon an axis, and toward the apex of the cone a large, beautiful diamond of almost priceless worth. It was well worth looking at. But I have never recalled that scene but the thought has come to me that the single soul of the raggedest pauper on the streets, of the most degraded woman, of the most ignorant boy or girl on the street is of infinitely more value in God's sight than ten thousand gems like that.—R. A. Torrey.

879. Saving One Life.

Some years ago in Salt Rapids, Minnesota, two farmer brothers were digging a well. The one was down in the well with a bucket, and the other at the top with the windlass. The man who was digging down in the well struck a quicksand, and the sand commenced to pour into it. Fortunately there was a good broad plank down in the well, and the man at the bottom got underneath that plank, but the sand silted in from every side. His brother at the top could hear his voice, and knew that he was living. He sent out word for help, and from all over the township the townspeople gathered at the mouth of the well to try and dig the man out. They dug on throughout the day, and at night torches were brought, and in relays through the long night all the men in the township worked on and on, digging out the sand as it kept pouring in, and before dawn they succeeded in getting the man out. I afterwards saw him alive and well. A whole township working all night to dig out one man, to save his life! Was it worth while? I say it was. And Christ dug very deep to save our souls.—R. A. Torrey.

880. Man Has a Soul.

Some time ago the Rev. James Armstrong preached at Harmony, near the Wabash, when a doctor of that place, a professed Deist, called on his associates to accompany him while he attacked the Methodists, as he said. At first he asked Mr. Armstrong if he followed preaching to save souls. He answered in the affirmative. He then asked Mr. Armstrong if he ever saw a soul. "No." If he ever heard a soul. "No." If he ever tasted a soul. "No." If he ever smelled a soul. "No." If he ever felt a soul. "Yes, thank God!" said Mr. Armstrong. "Well," said the doctor, "there are four of the five senses against one that there is a soul." Mr. Armstrong then asked the gentleman if he was a doctor of medicine; and he also answered in the affirmative. He then asked the doctor if he ever saw a pain. "No." If he ever heard a pain. "No." If he ever tasted a pain. "No." If he ever smelled a pain. "No." If he ever felt a pain. "Yes." Mr. Armstrong then said: "There are also four senses against one to evidence that there is a pain; yet, sir, you know that there is a pain, and I know there is a soul." The doctor appeared confounded, and walked off.—Whitecross.

881. Neglected Soul.

"Two things a master commits to his servant's care," saith one, "the child and the child's clothes." It will be but a poor excuse for the servant to say at his master's return, "Sir, here are all the child's clothes neat and clean, but the child is lost!" Much so will be the account that many will give to God of their souls and bodies at the great day. "Lord, here is my body; I was very careful of it. I neglected nothing that belonged to its content and welfare; but for my soul, that is lost and cast away for ever. I took little thought and care about it."—J. Flavel.

SOUL INJURIES.

882. Spite Fence.

On a prominent boulevard in Chicago there stood for many years a fence eighteen feet high, erected by a woman who imagined her neighbor was peering into her windows. While it effectually cut off the inlook, it shut the sunshine out of her own yard, ruined the lawn and cast a shadow upon the house. Spite and resentment always cast the heaviest shadow over the heart that harbors them, and shut out the sunshine of life.—Adult Bible Class Monthly.

883. Crime Against the Life of the Soul.

When, a half-century ago, the famous Kaspar Hauser appeared in the streets of Nuremberg, having been released from a dungeon in which he had been confined from infancy, having never seen the face or heard the voice of man, nor gone without the walls of his prison, nor seen the full light of day, a distinguished lawyer in Germany wrote a legal history of the case, which he entitled, "A Crime Against the Life of the Soul." It was well named. . . . But it is no worse than the treatment some men bestow upon their own souls. . . . As the poor German youth was at length thrust out into the world for which he was unfitted, with untrained senses in a world of sense, without speech in a world of language, with a dormant mind in a world of thought, so many go out of this world with no preparation in that part of their natures that will most be called into use.—Theodore T. Munger.

884. Starving Indian.

An aged Indian, half naked and famished, wandered into one of our Western settlements, begging for food to keep him from starving. While eagerly devouring the bread bestowed by the hand of charity, a bright colored ribbon, from which was suspended a small dirty pouch, was seen around his neck. On being questioned, he said it was a charm given him in his younger days; and, opening it, displayed a faded, greasy paper, which he handed to the interrogator for inspection. It proved to be a regular discharge from the Federal army, entitling him to a pension for life, and signed by General Washington himself. Now here was a name which would have been honored almost anywhere, and which, if presented in the right place, would have ensured him support and plenty for the remainder of his days, and yet he wandered hungry and forlorn. What a picture of men with all the promises of Jesus, yet starving in the wilderness!—Rev. C. Perrin.

885. Cash the Drafts.

A poor old widow, living in the Scottish Highlands, was called upon one day by a gentleman who had heard that she was in need. The old lady complained of her condition, and remarked that her son was in Australia, and doing well. "But does he do nothing to help you?" inquired the visitor. "No, nothing," was the reply. "He writes to me regularly once a month, but only sends me a little picture with his letter." The gentleman asked to see one of the pictures that she had received, and found each of them to be a draft of ten pounds. All the old lady needed was to be able to recognize those "pictures," and she could have had the bodily comforts she needed so much. That is the condition of many of God's children. Our Heavenly Father has given us many "exceeding great and precious promises," of which we are either ignorant or which we fail to take as our own.—The Sunday Circle.

886. Regret for Contempt of Religion.

Alas! how many will, when too late, regret their neglect of, or contempt for religion! A few years ago the Prime Minister of England stepped across Downing Street with a friend, who wanted some information from one of the Government officials. They entered the particular office, and on inquiring for the Head of the Department, they were curtly told to "wait" by an insolent young clerk, who did not even look up from his newspaper, and presently added an order to "wait outside." When the principal official returned, he was thunder-struck to find the Head of the Government sitting with his friend on the steps of the stone staircase. Equally surprised was the clerk, when, to his dismay, he learned by his dismissal the result of his careless insolence. In earthly things men bitterly regret "chances" lost or thrown away, and yet we treat with indifference our opportunities in the spiritual life. With slow and sorrowful steps the compassionate Saviour obeyed these requests, and departed from those souls whom He would have so gladly blessed.—W. Hardman, M.A.

887. Self-Deception.

This youth was under a sad delusion. In one of Hogarth's cartoons a demented prisoner sits in the straw, chained like a beast to his dungeon wall; but he smiles and sings as if he were the happiest of mortals. The straw is his throne, his jailers are his courtiers; he deems himself the envy of crowned kings. Not greater is his self-deception than that of the self-righteous man who deems himself worthy to appear in judgment before God.—D. J. Burrell.

888. Suffocating the Soul.

Not long ago, in the wall of an old castle in Italy where some repairs were being made, the workmen found a relic that told a tale of ancient barbarity and crime. Some baron of the olden time put an enemy in a little niche in the wall, just large enough to hold a man, and then set the masons at work building the wall around him. Slowly the masonry crept up, as stone was laid on stone, until at last it arose and left the man standing there in his living tomb. "Ah," you say, "such horrible forms of torture were only possible in days of darkness, when men exercised their ingenuity inventing new modes of cruelty." Shall I tell you of something worse that is modern? A man starts out to build a structure, which he calls "Success." Slowly, as the years pass, he walls in his soul. Duty calls, and he answers, "I cannot sacrifice my interests for you." Pity pleads, and he says: "I really cannot afford to do anything for you." Righteousness rings out with its prophetic demands, and he says: "It will injure the stock-market if I join in these agitations." Day by day, year by year, every lofty ideal, every summons of sympathy, every project of truth, every purpose of purity, finds him making the same old excuse: "Beware of going too far!" "Keep your eye on the main chance!" "Look out for number one!" "Be just good enough to gain your ends!" "Use men, use your city, use the world to advance those plans of material prosperity and commercial power that minister to your own self-aggrandizement!" So he builds his living tomb. So he suffocates his soul. — Rev. George H. Ferris.

TEMPTATION.

889. Change Hitching Posts.

Do not stop to parley with the tempter, as many a one has been ruined in this way.

A young western farmer who had frequented the village barroom, was converted to temperance principles, but on his visits to the village still continued to tie his team to the hotelman's hitching-post. The trained and watchful eye of a good old deacon noticed this, and after congratulating the youth upon his conversion, he said: "George, I am a good deal older than you, and will be pardoned, I know, if I make a suggestion out of my wider Christian experience. No matter how strong you think you are, take my advice and at once change your hitching-post." Christ made no mistake when He said, "Watch!"—Charles R. Ross.

890. Beans of the Devil.

"My friends, the other day I was going down the street, and I saw a drove of pigs following a man. This excited my curiosity so much that I determined to follow. I did so; and, to my great surprise, I saw them follow him to the slaughter-house. I was anxious to know how this was brought about; and I said to the man: "My friend, how did you manage to induce those pigs to follow you here?"

"Oh, did you not see?" said the man. "I had a basket of beans under my arm; and I dropped a few as I came along, and so they followed me." "Yes," said the preacher, "and I thought, so it is; the devil has his basket of beans under his arm, and he drops them as he goes along, and what multitudes he induces to follow him to an everlasting slaughter-house! Yes, friends, and all your broad and crowded thoroughfares are strewn with the beans of the devil." —Rowland Hill.

891. Guardian Angels.

Dean Stanley recalls a well-known German picture representing a young man playing at chess with the Tempter of his soul. There he sits, intent upon the game; he sees only the moves of the pieces immediately before him; he thinks he will still win the game. Opposite to him sits the Fiend, exulting over an easy prey. Already piece after piece has been taken; here a good deed gone, there a prayer removed; a few more successful moves on the Tempter's part, and the game is won—and the soul is lost. But there is yet another figure in the picture, which gives to the scene at once a deeper pathos and also a ray of hope. Behind the young man, unseen by him, unnoticed by the Tempter, stands the Guardian Angel of his soul. The wings are already spread for flight: the face is already turning away. "It is a face not of anger, not of disappointment, not of despair, not of resistance, but of profound compassion and grief."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

892. No Room in the Inn.

There was an old saint in far-away days—such a one, we can imagine, as was the Venerable Bede in the midst of his young students—who lived a life of such purity and serenity that his younger comrades marvelled. The wonder grew upon them so greatly that at length they resolved to approach the master, and ask to be told the secret of this purity, this peace. They came one day, and said: "Father, we are harassed with many temptations, which appeal to us so often and so strongly that they give us no rest. You seem to be untroubled by these things, and we would learn the secret. Do not the temptations that harass our souls appeal to you? Do they never come knocking at the door of your heart?" The old man listened, and smiled, and said: "My children, I do know something of the things of which you speak. The temptations that trouble you do come, making their appeal to me. But, when these temptations knock at the door of my heart, I answer, 'The place is occupied.'"—Edward White.

893. Preparing Ourselves.

I have heard of a cavalier who lost his life because he stopped to curl his hair when Cromwell's soldiers were after him. Some of you may laugh at the man's foolishness; but that is all that your talk about fitness is. What is all your fitness but the curling of your hair when you are in imminent danger of losing your soul? Your fitness is nothing to Christ. Remember the hymn—

Let not conscience make you linger,
  Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
  Is to feel your need of Him.

—C. H. Spurgeon.

894. Fleeting Vanities.

Among the treasures most coveted are jewels, but in the "Diary" of Madame D'Arblay, whose maiden name was Burney, and who was lady-in-waiting on Queen Charlotte, consort of George III, we read: "The Queen told me how well at first she had liked her jewels and ornaments. 'But how soon,' cried she, 'was that over! Believe me, Miss Burney, it is a pleasure of a week—a fortnight at most. The trouble of putting them on, the care they require, and the fear of losing them, made me in a fortnight's time long for my own earlier dress, and wish never to see them more.' "—W. F. Adeney, M.A.

895. False Emphasis.

It is said that a soldier who enlisted in the American Civil War took along his kit of watchmaker's tools, and while they were in camp he did considerable business. But one day when the order came to strike tents and prepare for battle, he looked around his tent in dismay, and exclaimed: "Why, I can't possibly go, for I have twelve watches to repair, which I have promised by Saturday night." The man had forgotten what he had enlisted for. The soldiers of the King of kings sometimes seem to forget what they enlisted for.—The Christian Herald.

896. Riding to a Fall.

In Rochester, New York, there is a little picture hanging in an art gallery which represents a young man riding very swiftly on a horse. Out in front of him is floating what seems to be an angel, holding in her hands a crown. The young man is reaching out his hands to get the crown. He is trampling under his feet flowers and helpless children. He almost touches the crown, but just one more leap of the horse and he will go over the precipice in front of him. Suppose he does reach the crown, he will have it in his hands only for a moment, and then he is lost. That is the way it is with many who are bound to have pleasure, whether they have to sin in obtaining it or not.—C. H. Tyndell.

897. Most Wonderful Sight in Christendom.

John De Wert, the general of the Spanish army, happened to be a prisoner of war on parole during the detention of M. de St. Cyran. Whilst he stayed at Paris the Cardinal de Richelieu gave a superb ballet, to which he invited the Spanish nobleman; and every expense was lavished upon the decorations which could contribute to give the foreigner a high idea of French magnificence. The cardinal retained his noble guest next to him during the whole of the performance, which he beheld in perfect silence; at which M. de Richelieu, not a little chagrined, asked him "what he considered as the most marvellous spectacle he had ever seen?" John De Wert immediately replied, "That of all the wonders he had ever seen none had so much astonished him as to see in the dominions of his very Christian majesty bishops amusing themselves at theatres, while saints languished in prisons."—"Tour to Alet."

TESTING.

898. Use of Troubles.

"When in Amsterdam, Holland, last summer," says a traveller, "I was much interested in a visit we made to a place then famous for polishing diamonds. We saw the men engaged in the work. When a diamond is found it is rough and dark like a common pebble. It takes a long time to polish it, and it is very hard work. It is held by means of a piece of metal close to the surface of a large wheel, which is kept going around. Fine diamond dust is put on this wheel, nothing else being hard enough to polish the diamond. And this work is kept on for months and sometimes for several years before it is finished. And if a diamond is intended for a king, then the greater time and trouble are spent upon it." Jesus calls His people His jewels. To fit them for beautifying His crown, they must be polished like diamonds, and He makes use of the troubles He sends to polish His jewels.—O. T. Anecdotes.

899. Tried and True.

When a founder has cast his bell he does not at once put it into the steeple, but tries it with the hammer, and beats it on every side, to see if there be a flaw. So when Christ converts a man he does not at once convey him to heaven, but suffers him to be beaten upon by many temptations and afflictions, and then exalts him to his crown. As snow is of itself cold, yet warms and refreshes the earth, so afflictions, though in themselves grievous, keep the Christian's soul warm and make it fruitful.—Mason.

900. Suffering and Song.

It is said of Jenny Lind that when Goldschmidt first heard her sing, somebody said, as he walked out of the opera house, "Goldschmidt, how did you like her singing?" He said: "Well, there was a harshness about her voice that needs toning down. If I could marry that woman, break her heart and crush her feelings, then she could sing." And it is said that afterwards when he did marry her and broke her heart and crushed her feelings, Jenny Lind sang with the sweetest voice ever listened to; so sweet that the angels of God would almost rush to the parapets of heaven to catch the strains.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

901. Suffer as a Christian.

During the renowned campaign from "Atlanta to the Sea," General Sherman had promoted General O. O. Howard to lead a special division—the night before the great review in Washington. Sherman sent for his subordinate officer and said to him: "Howard, the political friends of the man whom you succeeded are bound that he shall ride at the head of his corps, and I want you to help me out."

"It is my command," said Howard, "and I am entitled to ride at its head."

"Of course you are," replied Sherman. "You led them through Georgia and the Carolinas; but, Howard, you are a Christian and can stand the disappointment."

"Putting it on that ground, there is but one answer. Let him ride at the head of the corps."

"You let him have the honour," said Sherman, "but you will report to me at 9 o'clock, and ride by my side at the head of the whole army." In vain Howard protested; but Sherman said, gently but authoritatively, "You are under my orders," and so it happened that the great Christian soldier, with his empty sleeve, rode at the head of the army at Sherman's side, and together they led the grand review. That is in harmony with the statement of Jesus, that whosoever abaseth himself shall be exalted. The crown is reached by way of the cross.—H. F. Sayles.

902. Legion of Honor.

I remember when I was a student in Paris, there was a young medical doctor who had exhibited wonderful skill in surgical operations, and who had pursued an original line of investigation, which had interested many of the professors, and which had thrown new light on the branch of medical science that he had made his specialty. He had studied, and investigated, and experimented, toiling for "La Gloire" as only a Frenchman can. He had pursued the bubble, Reputation; he had worked late and early, and at last Fame, he had it!

The papers in the boulevards were full of the fame of the young doctor, and it was decided that he should get, what is the aim and ambition of every Frenchman, the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour. He was on his death-bed, and far gone in consumption, gaunt and ghastly, with the eyes of him in a flame, yet with his mind searching and investigating to the last, and thinking: "Surely this will bring undying fame," when there came to him a messenger with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour.

When the eyes of the young man rested upon it, he said: "Just what I have been toiling for, undying honour." He took it up, and, feeling the hand of death upon him, he raised himself in the bed and exclaimed: "I will not die! I will not die! I will not die!" and he fell back and died, with the decoration in his hand. Ah! "the waters prevailed."

Though in your ambition you are toiling for fame, and you have obtained it, yet you have to die. It is better to have Christ than the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour. Have Jesus, and you are prepared for eternity. With His pardon, His forgiveness, come the call when it may, you are prepared. The world may pass away, and fall about our ears like a scaffolding that is thrown to the ground, but lo, the City of our God, where the ransomed are returned with songs to be with Christ forever, and I think I shall be among them that day. Will you? Through the blood of the Lamb!—John Robertson.

903. Attraction of Earth.

Sir Robert Ball, the great astronomer, said that a man who carries a sack of corn on earth could as easily carry six sacks of corn on a globe the size of the moon. But in a world as vast as the sun, even to pull out a watch from the pocket would be to tug at a weight of five or six pounds. It would be impossible to lift an arm, and if once a man were to lie down there, he could never get up again. So, in the spiritual realm, the weight of our burdens depends on the attractions of the earth. If the world is all to us, alas! how true it is that its burdens crush and overwhelm us.—Sunday At Home.

WHOSOEVER.

904. Healing for All.

I remember, when the Master Street Hospital, in Philadelphia, was opened during the war, a telegram came saying: "There will be three hundred wounded men tonight; be ready to take care of them"; and from my church there went in some twenty or thirty men and women to look after those poor wounded fellows. As they came, some from one part of the land, some from another, no one asked whether this man was from Oregon, or from Massachusetts, or from Minnesota, or from New York. There was a wounded soldier, and the only question was how to take off the rags most gently, and put on the bandage, and administer the cordial. And when a soul comes to God, He does not ask where you came from, or what your ancestry was. Healing for your wounds. Pardon for your guilt. Comfort for your troubles. —T. De Witt Talmage.

905. Whosoever Will.

"Whosoever will." That reminds me of a penitent in Georgia who came to the altar during a revival service. The preacher went to him and said, trying to encourage him, "Won't you take Jesus Christ as your Saviour?" The young man said: "I am not one of the elect. I am one of the reprobates. I feel it all over"; and I don't suppose a poor soul ever tried to seek God, that the devil didn't slip up and say: "You are one of the reprobates. God didn't die to save you." The preacher said to him, "Well, my brother, listen to me a minute. If you could see your name, James B. Green, written on the Lamb's Book of Life, would you believe that Christ died for you and that you were one of the elect?" The poor fellow thought a moment and then said: "No, sir: There are so many more people of that name." "If you could see your name, James B. Green, Screven County, Georgia, would you believe it then?" "No, there might have been other men of that name before I was born." "Well, if you could see it, James B. Green, Screven County, Georgia, the year 1867, would you then believe it meant you?" "No, there may have been someone else at this time by that name." "Then," said the preacher, "if you could see it, James B. Green, Screven County, Georgia, the Nineteenth district and the year 1867, would you believe it was you?" The young man said: "I could not know definitely." "Now," said the preacher, "God Almighty saw all that trouble and He just put it into these two words and said, 'whosoever will,'" and the poor fellow jumped up and said: "Thank God, I know that means me."—Sam Jones.

906. Whosoever.

"I thank God for this word, 'whosoever,'" remarked Richard Baxter. "Did it read, there is mercy for Richard Baxter, I am so vile, so sinful, that I would have thought it must have meant some other Richard Baxter; but this word 'whosoever' includes the worst of all the Baxters that ever lived."—C. G. Finney, D.D.

907. Moral Deafness.

There is a form of deafness known to physicians in which the person affected is able to hear everything except words. In such a case the ear, as an apparatus for mere hearing, may be so perfect that the tick of a watch or the song of a bird is readily appreciated, but owing to a local injury deeper than the ear, for it is in the brain itself, all spoken words of his mother tongue are as unintelligible to the sufferer as those of a foreign language. Give him a book, and he may read as understandingly as ever, but every word addressed to him through his ear reaches his consciousness only as a sound, not as a word. There is a moral deafness which corresponds to this physical infirmity, but which, instead of being rare, is as common as it is harmful and disabling. To all men there is given an inner ear, which has been fashioned to hear Wisdom's words, but that ear often seems so dull of hearing that there appears no sign of response to her utterances.—Prof. W. H. Thompson.

908. "Weep for Yourselves."

One who knew Whitefield well, and attended his preaching more frequently, perhaps, than any other person, said he hardly ever knew him to go through a sermon without weeping: his voice was often interrupted by his tears, which sometimes were so excessive as to stop him from proceeding for a few moments. "You blame me for weeping," he would say, "but how can I help it when you will not weep for yourselves, though your immortal souls are on the verge of destruction, and for aught you know you are hearing your last sermon and may never more have an opportunity to have Christ offered to you?"—J. R. Andrews.

VISION.

909. Seeing Now.

Dr. Alexander in picturing for us something of the glory of the resurrection morning imagined Laura Bridgeman, who had never known sight or sound, standing on a pinnacle and an angel from God's throne coming and touching her sightless eyes and crying, "Daughter, see!" and touching her soundless ears and crying, "Daughter, hear!" and into her eyes and into her ears roll the myriad sights and sounds of a world all new.

But, oh, my friend, you need not wait for the resurrection morning for an experience like that, for into the soul absolutely surrendered to Him He will pour all the treasure and all the illimitable glory of the Spirit of God Himself, for "the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—William E. Biederwolf.

910. Light Enough.

A boy was walking with his father along a lonely road at night, carrying a lantern. He told his father he was afraid, because the lantern showed such a little way ahead. The father answered, "That is so, but if you walk straight on, you will find that the light will reach to the end of the journey." God often gives us light for only a little way ahead, but He always gives at least that, and so He always gives us light enough for the whole journey. — Christian Endeavor World.

911. Divine Light.

Last summer I visited Luray Cave, Virginia. Our guide gave us a candle, and we started in. It was a very uninviting journey. We passed through one opening and then another. Presently I said, "Is this the great Luray Cave?"

There was some little beauty there, but not what I expected.

Finally we reached the great audience chamber, and were surrounded, as they promised, by beauties beyond description; but I could not appreciate them. But our guide unrolled a band of ribbon, held it to the candle, and like lightning dispelling the darkness, there flashed out the magnesium light, which is the brightest light in the world. Oh, now such beauty—angel faces, patriarchs, stalactites and stalagmites—glory! glory!

So in the study of God's Word.

The mere taper of human reason will never reveal its beauty. Ask God to flash down upon us the Holy Spirit, and then the glorious stalactites and stalagmites of truth will stand before us in all their beauty.—L. G. Broughton.

912. God Sees Us.

In the war of the 60's, one of the officers of the Southern armies was taken a prisoner, and kept for quite a while in a Federal prison. In his memoirs he recounts his prison experiences. He tells us that he was guarded day and night, and that he could not look up, neither to the right, nor to the left, night or day, but that eyes were watching his every movement. He tells us that if he started in his dreams and was rudely awakened from his sleep, standing over him and watching him were eyes that never ceased to observe his every movement. He tells us that of all the experiences, torturing and terrible, through which he passed in that fearful, fratricidal war, that one experience of eyes watching him all the time was the most torturing experience of all.

Oh, my brother men, if the truth could only come home to us properly, this very hour, that God sees us and knows us altogether, and that for everything in our lives, whether public or secret, He will bring us into judgment at last, what a difference such fact would make in our conduct before Him!—George W. Truett, D.D.

913. Facing Godwards.

In the old myth, Orion whose eyes had been put out whilst he slept on the seashore, recovered sight by gazing toward the rising sun. If our inner vision has been blinded, and all the grand truths and hopes of life lost to sight, let us turn our blind faces toward heaven and keep them there, until He who looseth the bands of Orion turns for us the shadow of death into the morning.—W. L. Watkinson.

914. Refusing the Light.

I once happened to be on a visit to a great castle situated on the top of a hill. There was a steep cliff, at the bottom of which was a rapid river. Late one night, there was a person anxious to get home from that castle, in the midst of a thunderstorm. The night was blackness itself. The woman was asked to stop till the storm was over; but she declined: next they begged her to take a lantern, that she might be able to keep upon the road from the castle to her home. She said she did not require a lantern, but could do very well without one. She went. Perhaps she was frightened by the storm (I know not the cause); but in the midst of the darkness she wandered from the path, and fell over the cliff: the next day that swollen river washed to the shore the poor lifeless body of this foolish woman. —Bishop Villiers.

915. God Omniscient.

While the Americans were blockading Cuba, several captains endeavored to elude their vigilance by night, trusting that the darkness would conceal them as they passed between the American war-ships. But in almost every case the dazzling rays of a searchlight frustrated the attempt, and the fugitives' vessel was captured by the Americans. The brilliant searchlight sweeping the broad ocean and revealing even the smallest craft on its surface is but a faint type of the Eternal Light from which no sinner can hide his sin.—Weekly Pulpit.

916. Looking Unto Jesus.

Two boys were playing in the snow one day, when one said to the other, "Let us see who can make the straightest path in the snow." His companion readily accepted the proposition, and they started. One boy fixed his eyes on a tree, and walked along without taking his eyes off the object selected. The other boy set his eyes on the tree also, and, when he had gone a short distance, he turned, and looked back to see how true his course was. He went a little distance farther, and again turned to look over his steps. When they arrived at their stopping place, each halted and looked back. One path was true as an arrow, while the other ran in a zigzag course. "How did you get your path so true?" asked the boy who had made the crooked steps. "Why," said the other boy, "I just set my eyes on the tree, and kept them there until I got to the end; while you stopped and looked back, and wandered out of your course." Just so is the Christian life. If we fix the eyes of our hope, our trust, and our faith upon Jesus Christ, and keep them continually fastened thereon, we will at last land at the desired haven, with flowers of immortal victory at our feet.—C. W. Bibb.

917. As Jesus Passes By.

Dr. Matthews in his book about Madagascar, where he was for thirty years a missionary, describes this native custom: "The prisoners were kept in chains, but they had to earn their own living, and were confined to prison only during the night. On the days, however, on which the Sovereign appeared they were not allowed to leave the prison; or if allowed out on these days, at noon, before the Sovereign was to appear, they had all to return to prison, were counted, and locked up. Why? Because if one of those criminals managed to secrete himself, and then emerged from his hiding-place to gaze at and salute the Sovereign, as she passed, wearing her diadem and beautiful in the glory of her royal apparel, he was a free man, whatever his crime had been. His chains were at once struck off, for he had looked on the Sovereign in her beauty and saluted her, the salutation being, "Is it well with you, my Sovereign?" and no one could do that and still remain a prisoner. —Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

918. He Followed the Star.

When Whitefield, the great preacher, went to America (he went five times), he stood on the steps of the Court-House in Philadelphia, and preached to the people; and there was amongst the crowd a little boy. The little boy saw that Mr. George Whitefield could not see to read his Bible very well, so he got his lantern, and lit it, and held the lantern for Mr. Whitefield to see to read by. Mr. Whitefield was very much obliged to him. The little boy listened—with all his might and main—to Mr. Whitefield's preaching. He listened so much that he let the lantern tumble down, and it was broken all to pieces. Many years afterwards Mr. Whitefield came back to America, on his fifth journey. He stopped at the house of a minister, who said to him one day: "Do you remember, sir, preaching once in Philadelphia, and a little boy, who was holding the lantern, dropped it and broke it?" "That I do," said Mr. Whitefield, "and I would give anything in the world to know what has become of that little boy." The minister said, "I was the little boy, sir. I held the lantern. I listened to you. I let it drop. Your preaching made me what I am, a Christian minister." He "followed the star."—J. Vaughan.

919. Heavenly Light.

It is deep night, faint stars are shining, and along the edge of a far-stretching mere two figures are hurrying—in front the husband (a peasant, of course), stick in hand, determined and unflagging; behind him the wife, patient and dutiful, striving to keep up. All is dark; the figures, as in so many of Millet's pictures, veiled in obscure glamour, their harsher features softened, the larger, more human element emerging. There is only one spot of light in the whole scene and that is between the man's arms. It looks like a dim lamp; it is the face of a little baby turned toward the stars. A faint reflection from it falls even on the face of the man. That is all. Following this light the two figures hurry on —behind them stretches the reedy, desolate mere.—"Angel's Wings." —E. Carpenter.

920. Seeing Jesus.

When Munkacsy's "Christ Before Pilate" was on exhibition a few years ago in Hamilton, Ontario, a sailor from one of the lake boats accosted the woman who was in attendance at the door with the blunt question, "Is Christ here? How much to see Christ?" When he was told the admission fee, he growled out, "Well, I suppose I'll have to pay it," and putting down a piece of silver he swaggered into the room. He sat down in front of the great picture and studied it for a moment or two, and presently off came his hat. He gazed upon it a little longer, and then leaning down he picked up the descriptive catalogue which he had dropped when he took his seat. He read it over, and studied the painting anew, dropping his face into his hands at intervals. Thus he remained for a full hour. When he came out there were tears in his eyes, and suppressed sobs in his voice as he said: "Madam, I came here to see Christ because my mother asked me to. I am a rough man sailing on the lakes, and before I went on this cruise my mother wanted me to see this picture, and I came in to please her. I never believed in any such thing, but the man who could paint a picture like that—he must have believed in it. There is something in it that makes me believe in it, too. Madam, God helping me, I am a changed man from to-day." If an idealization of Christ by an artist can so effectively appeal to the conscience of a wayward man, what will not a vision of the Master, inspired of the Holy Spirit, accomplish for those who sincerely seek an introduction to him?—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

921. Adjusted Faculties.

There is produced in a telescope the image of a star. There is produced in a soul an image of God. When does the image of the star start up in the chamber of the telescope? Only when the lenses are clear and rightly adjusted, and when the axis of vision in the tube is brought into exact coincidence with the line of the rays of light from the star. When does the image of God, or the inner sense of peace and pardon, spring up in the human soul? Only when the faculties of the soul are rightly adjusted in relation to each other, and the will brought into coincidence with God's will. How much is man's work, and how much is the work of the light? Man adjusts the lenses and the tube; the light does all the rest. Man may, in the exercise of his freedom, as upheld by Divine power, adjust his faculties to spiritual light, and when adjusted in a certain way God flashes through them. — Joseph Cook.

922. Bishop Tucker's Vision.

A young English artist stood before his canvas one day painting a picture called "A Lost Woman." As the work grew under his hand his soul became more and more engrossed in the tragedy he was trying to portray. It represented a stormy night in winter. A poor woman, thinly clad, with her babe pressed to her bosom, was wending her way along a dark, deserted street. Faint lights flickered here and there, and all doors were closed and barred. As the artist depicted the agony on the unfortunate woman's face his emotion deepened, and he threw his brush aside and exclaimed, "Why not go out and seek to save the actually lost?" On the instant he forsook his studio and resolved to prepare himself for the ministry. He entered Oxford University, supporting himself by the aid of his brush till he had finished his course. He then plunged into the work of rescuing the perishing, which took him through the slums of London to the dark regions of Uganda. This is the story of Bishop Tucker of Africa, and, as a modern reproduction of the spirit of Jesus, it helps one to understand the Master's attitude toward the lost.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

923. Hatred of the Light.

The devil fears the light, and this is one reason why we should always keep it burning. A governor of the Bahamas, who was about to return to England, promised to do his best to procure from the Home Government any favour the Colonists might desire. And what think you was their unanimous reply: "Tell them to tear down the lighthouses—they are ruining the Colony!" The men were wreckers, and they hated the light. And the devil so hates the light that he would tear down every spiritual lighthouse in the land if he only could.—Sunday Circle.

924. Two Lights.

At the entrance to the harbor at the Isle of Man there are two lights, which guide the mariner into the harbor. One would think the two signals would confuse the pilot. But the fact is he has to keep them in line, and so long as he keeps the two lights in line his vessel is safe. And it is just as we keep our eyes on the two signals—the love of God and the love of man—that we keep the channel, and are safe from the rocks on either hand.—W. L. Watkinson.

925. Spectacles.

One chapter in Mr. George William Curtis' volume, "Prue and I," is called "Mr. Titbottom's Spectacles." The magical quality of those spectacles was, that when their owner looked through them at people he ceased to see them as they ordinarily appeared on the street; he saw their real essential characters personified. Wonderful were the revelations that were made. He looked at one man and saw nothing but a ledger. Another was simply a billiard cue, another a bank bill, another a great hog, or a wolf, or a vulgar fraction. On the other hand, he saw the good that others failed to see. One of his school teachers was a deep well of living water in which he saw the stars. Another was a tropical garden full of fruits and flowers. In one woman's heart lay concealed in the depth of character great excellencies like pearls at the bottom of the sea, little suspected by most, but perhaps love is nothing else than the sight of them by one person. Another, called an old maid, was a white lily, fresh, luminous, and fragrant still. Another's nature was a tropic in which the sun shone. and birds sang, and flowers bloomed forever. His wrinkled grandmother appeared as a Madonna, "and I have yet heard of no queen, no belle, no imperial beauty whom in grace, and brilliancy, and persuasive courtesy she might not have surpassed."—H. F. Sayles.

926. See as God Sees.

Humboldt tells of being deeply touched and impressed by finding a beautiful flower on the edge of the crater of Vesuvius. In a little hollow in the lava ashes and dust had settled, and when rain had fallen there was a cupful of rich soil ready. Then a bird or the wind had borne a seed and dropped it into this bit of a garden on the crater's lip, and a sweet flower grew there. No wonder the great traveler was so moved by such a glimpse of beauty in such a place. As we go through the world, we come now and then upon human lives which seem almost utterly dreary and desolate in their condition. Sorrow or sin has stripped them bare. Yet there is scarcely one such life in which we may not, if we will, cause a flower to bloom. If only we will show thoughtful sympathy, or do some gentle kindness, we will plant a spray of beauty amid the dust and ashes.—J. R. Miller.

927. A Soul to See.

I once strolled through a miserable Mexican village. The shadows were creeping over the cabins, where women came and went in silence, and men sat smoking at the cabin doors, while children played in swarms by the water. The air was like a breath of God, and all nature seemed as sacred as rest to a weary man. A black, bent, old negro woman, all patches from head to foot, frosty-headed and half blind, came crooning forth with a broken pot tied together, in which she had planted a flower to grow by her door. I stopped, watched her set it down and arrange it; and then, not wishing to stare rudely at this bent old creature, I said—"Good evening, auntie; it's a fine evening." She slowly straightened up, looked at me, looked away at the fading sunlight on the hills, and said softly, "Oh, it's a pretty world, Massa!" The old woman was a poetess—a prophetess. She had a soul to see the beauty, the poetry about her. "Oh, it's a pretty world, Massa!" She had no other form of expression, but that was enough. Hers was the password to nature. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold it was very good."—Joaquin Miller.

928. Healing Rays.

Some years ago an institution for the blind was erected in one of our large towns. The committee put their wise heads together, and decided that as the building was for the blind, for those who could not see—there was only waste of money and no reason in going to the expense of windows. Scientific ventilation and heating was provided, but no windows, because—as the committee very logically put it—it was no use in the world providing light for those who cannot see it. Accordingly, the new Blind Asylum was inaugurated and opened, and the poor, sightless patients settled into the house. Things did not go well with them, however. They began to sicken, one after another; a great languor fell on them, they felt always distressed and restless, craving for something, they hardly knew what; and after one or two had died, and all were ill, the committee sat on the matter, and resolved to open windows. Then the sun poured in, and the white faces recovered colour, and the flagging vital energies revived, the depressed spirits recovered, and health and rest returned. I think this is not unlike the condition of a vast number of people. Christ Jesus is the Sun of the soul, the Light of the world. It is He who gives health and rest to the heart, and fills the soul with that peace which passes man's understanding. But there is a good number who, in their wisdom, think they can do without Him; they are the wise committee men sitting on their own case, and building up walls to shut themselves in and shut Him out. They cannot see Jesus, the Light of the world; therefore, they can live without Him. Have you ever noticed what an expression of peace there is on the faces of those whose walk is with God, as contrasted with the unrest that characterizes the faces of those living without God in the world—not necessarily bad people, but living chiefly for the world, in a windowless asylum of their own construction? — S. Baring-Gould.

929. Seeing Double.

Be not like the foolish drunkard, who, staggering home one night, saw his candle lit for him. "Two candles!" said he, for his drunkenness made him see double. "I will blow out one"; and as he blew it out, in a moment he was in the dark. Many a man sees double through the drunkenness of sin. He thinks that he has one life to sow his wild oats in, and then the last part of his life in which to turn to God; so, like a fool, he blows out the only candle that he has, and in the dark he will have to lie down forever. — W. Wyatt Gill, B.A.

930. Dulness of Vision.

David Rittenhouse, of Pennsylvania, was a great astronomer. He was skillful in measuring the sizes of planets and determining the positions of the stars. But he found that, such was the distance of the stars, a silk thread stretched across the glass of his telescope, would entirely cover a star; and thus a silk fibre appeared to be larger in diameter than a star. Our sun is said to be 886,000 miles in diameter, and yet, seen from a distant star, could be covered, hidden behind a thread when that thread was stretched across the telescope. Just so we have seen some who never could behold the heavenly world. They always complained of dulness of vision when they looked in the heavenly direction. You might direct their eyes to the Star of Bethlehem through the telescope of faith and holy confidence; but, alas! there is a secret thread, a silken fibre, which, holding them in subserviency to the world, in some way obscures the light; and Jesus, the Star of Hope, is eclipsed, and their hope darkened. A very small sin, a very little self-gratification, may hide the light. To some, Jesus, as Saviour, appears very far off. He shall be seen where the heart lets nothing intervene.—Lady Brassey.

931. Intensified Light.

Fresnel, by forming one vast reflector from many small ones, produced a glare eight times as intense as had been previously known. Shining out from a lighthouse, it could be seen as far as the earth's curvature would permit. Buffon, by collocating several hundred small mirrors, and causing the flame of a galvanic battery to play upon their focal centre, melted, in two minutes, the hardest metals, and set wood on fire at a distance of two hundred feet. The hostile ships of Rome, lying in the harbour of Syracuse, were wrapped in flames, we are told, by the fierce power of a compound sun-glass which Archimedes made. These facts are suggestive. If we unite in reflecting the rays of Him who is the Sun of Righteousness, stirring scenes will follow. It can but cause a sweeping revival; and the more flames there are, thus joined, the intenser will be the effect. Candles long hidden under bushels should, therefore, be uncovered. Their proper place is on a candlestick. "Ye are the light of the world," and should help illumine it. Candles should also be trimmed. Many smoke. They need snuffing. The wick of formality is too long. The flame is feeble and it flickers. It looks like a rushlight, and ought to flash like a star. It is dimly lighting a single home, and might brighten a whole street. With every blaze clear, and every candle in its place, uniting their light, "as flame plays with flame," a tremendous religious disturbance would speedily be heard of in all directions. Light never fails to make a stir. As sunrise rouses a sleepy world, so would a burst of "spiritual brilliancy" awaken the unconverted.—J. S. Breckenridge.

932. False Lights.

Of olden times on the coast of Cornwall there were wreckers. These men tied a lantern on the head of an ass, and drove the animal along the heights that fringe the shore. Ships at sea saw this light, and thinking them to be guides where there was open water, ran towards them, fell on rocks, and were dashed to pieces. Then the wreckers came down to the shore, and took from the wrecked ship all that could be saved. There are a host of these false signals about in the religious world, leading men to destruction. What, then, are we to do? Look to the lighthouse of the Church, built by the hands of Jesus Christ. In it He has set the clear, steady light of revealed truth.—S. Baring-Gould.

933. Open Thou Mine Eyes.

There is a story told of a man crossing a mountain in Carnarvonshire one stormy night. It was so cold that in order to shelter his hands from the biting wind, he put the lantern under his cloak, and as the moon shone dimly through the clouds he thought he could trace his way without the lantern. All at once a gust of wind blew aside his cloak; the light shone forth, and suddenly revealed the edge of a large slate quarry, over which, in another moment, he would have fallen and have been dashed to pieces. He soon retraced his steps, but he did not hide the lantern under his cloak again that night. There are many who think that they can go through life—dark and dangerous as the way often is—without this lamp of God's truth; they therefore hide it out of sight, or neglect to trim it by constant and prayerful study. In many instances they do not find out their mistake and folly until it is too late. Others have had this light unexpectedly cast upon their paths, to reveal to them some great danger; thus their steps have been suddenly arrested, and they have learned never to try to do without that light again.—D. Davies.

934. Deliverance by Looking to Jesus.

A lady had a dream, in which she fancied herself at the bottom of a deep pit. She looked round to see if there were any way of getting out; but in vain. Presently, looking upward, she saw in that part of the heavens immediately above the mouth of the pit a beautiful bright star. Steadily gazing at it, she felt herself to be gradually lifted upward. She looked down to ascertain how it was, and immediately found herself at the bottom of the pit. Again her eye caught sight of the star, and again she felt herself ascending. She had reached a considerable height. Still desirous of an explanation of so strange a phenomenon, she turned her eyes downward, and fell to the bottom with fearful violence. On recovering from the effect of the shock, she bethought herself as to the meaning of it all, and once again turned her eyes to the star, still shining so brightly above, and yet once again felt herself borne upward. Steadily did she keep her eyes upon its light, till at length, she found herself out of the horrible pit, and her feet safely planted on the solid ground above. It taught her the lesson that, in the hour of danger and trouble, deliverance is to be found, and found only, by looking unto Jesus.—T. Guthrie, D.D.

935. Removing Obstruction to Sight.

The other day I had the privilege of witnessing one of our great surgeons remove the cataract from a woman's eye. It is a beautiful illustration of God's work of deliverance from sin. It was done almost instantaneously. The cataract was taken out of the eye. The surgeon took it right out, and then, very soon afterwards, he put glasses on that woman's eye, and he said, "Mr. Harris, take out your watch," and to the woman he said: "How long have you been blind?" She said, "I have been blind for six years." "Now," he said, "look through this glass, and tell what his watch says." She read it at once, hour hand and minute hand. Why? Because the surgeon had taken out of the eye that which obscured the vision; and because that operator had not only taken out what hindered the vision but he had given her, in the lens, that which could take the place of it. May God clarify our spiritual vision by purifying our hearts, and filling them with the Holy Ghost!—Sunday Circle.

936. God's Guiding Light.

The great problem in the construction of large lighthouses upon high and necessarily exposed points is, how best to prevent oscillation or swaying of the structure in times of prevailing wind or storm. It may be readily perceived that any variation, however slight, in the direction of the rays of light from the lamps when the lighthouse is in use, as at night, would make very material difference to the mariner far out at sea. Ships guiding their course in the path of the lighthouse beams would be very liable to be thrust from the line of safety altogether, and thus there would be created the danger of serious disaster, if indeed not actually causing loss of life and property. But no such danger confronts the Christian mariner out upon life's sea, for God's guiding light, the lighthouse of the Scriptures, is "fixed in heaven."—G. V. Reichell.

937. Joyful Discovery.

A touching story is told of the child of a French painter. The little girl lost her sight in infancy, and her blindness was supposed to be incurable. A famous oculist in Paris, however, performed an operation on her eyes and restored her sight. Her mother had long been dead, and her father had been her only friend and companion. When she was told that her blindness could be cured, her one thought was that she could see him; and when the cure was complete, and the bandages were removed, she ran to him, and, trembling, pored over his features, shutting her eyes now and then, and passing her fingers over his face, as if to make sure that it was he. The father had a noble head and presence, and his every look and motion were watched by his daughter with the keenest delight. For the first time his constant tenderness and care seemed real to her. If he caressed her, or even looked upon her kindly, it brought tears to her eyes. "To think," she cried, holding his hand close in hers, "that I had this father so many years and never knew him!"—Rev. Harry Rogers, D.D.

938. Face to Face.

Two infidels once sat in a railway car discussing Christ's wonderful life. One of them said, "I think an interesting romance could be written about Him." The other replied, "And you are just the man to write it. Set forth the correct view of His life and character. Tear down the prevailing sentiment as to His divineness and paint Him as He was—a man among men." The suggestion was acted upon and the romance was written. The man who made the suggestion was Colonel Ingersoll; the author was General Lew Wallace; and the book was "Ben Hur." In the process of constructing it he found himself facing the unaccountable Man. The more he studied His life and character the more profoundly he was convinced that He was more than a man among men; until at length, like the centurion under the cross, he was constrained to cry, "Verily, this was the Son of God."—D. J. Burrell.

939. Restricted Vision.

In June, 1897, the steamer *Catalonia* at ten o'clock at night was found to be on fire. One of my friends has told me that he passed the deck and considered himself lost because the flames were burning fiercely. Finally the fire was under control and the people sang, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Telling me of the lessons that he learned on this awful journey, he said: "That night at twelve o'clock, when the pumps were being forced and the clouds of smoke were taking on new dimensions and we were wondering what the morning would bring us, the man on the bridge shouted, as he had at each midnight of the trip, "Eight bells, all's well!" Had the man down in the stateroom watching by the side of his sick wife heard the words, he might have said, "It's a falsehood," but that man's vision was restricted by the narrow walls of his stateroom. Had the mother and daughter, sitting in the cabin, with their arms about each other, wondering why they had been allowed to sail on the *Catalonia* and leave their loved ones behind, heard it, they might have said, "The man is beside himself," but they could not see beyond the cabin. Had the lonely traveler who stood near the hatchway given it a thought he might have said, "It's a lie," but he could not see through the clouds of smoke at which he stared silently. But the vision of the watch swept the horizon, and there was no obstruction in the ship's path. He knew that each revolution of the *Catalonia's* machinery pushed the ship on her way to Queenstown. He had a right to say it. I somehow seem to hear the sound of the gongs in the tops of the trees and have evidence that God is coming to His church with blessing. It is true there is in some quarters indifference, in many placed worldliness, but I can see no insurmountable barrier in the way of progress of the Kingdom of God.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

940. Vision-Spiritual.

A young man living in New York, whose eyes had been troubling him, consulted an oculist.

"What you want to do," said the specialist, "is to take a trip every day on the ferry, or in New Jersey, Long Island—any place where you can see long distances. Look up and down the river, across the fields, or, if it comes to the worst, go to the top of a skyscraper, and scan the horizon from that point. The idea is to get distance. You can use your eyes a great deal and always at close range. You can't use them any other way in town. Even when not reading and writing, the vision is limited by small rooms and narrow streets. No matter in what direction you look, there is a blank wall not far away to shut off the sight."

Even so it is true in the matter of our spiritual vision. The reason so many of us do not understand the things of God better is because we do not get distance. We confine truth, we limit the divine to what we know—to what is immediately about us. Get out and get "distance." — The Homiletic Review.

941. Vision of Opportunity.

About the time that the San Francisco earthquake disaster had run its course, a Chicago daily paper presented a suggestive picture on the front page. The center of the picture represented the smouldering ruins of the wasted city. The great business buildings and the beautiful homes, along with the wealth they represented, were marked by unsightly piles of brick and stone. Some buildings were standing, but with cracked walls and tottering towers. The highways were blocked with débris. Water mains, gas mains, sewers, lighting plants and trolley lines were wrecked and useless. Poverty-stricken, terrified and hungry crowds of people were sheltered in tents and fed with food sent by sympathetic citizens of other places.

At one side of this picture, standing on an eminence which overlooked the great ruin, there was a man who represented the manhood of the city. He was dressed in the clothes of a workingman; with his sleeves rolled up, his shirt open at the neck, and with one hand shading his eyes he looked at the awful spectacle before him. He leans forward. We follow the line of his vision, and find that it is centered in the great cloud of smoke, which hangs over the ruins. We look closer and in the center of that cloud is seen a beautiful picture of the restored city of the future. Its avenues throb with life and business activity. Its citizens are well fed and clothed, and peace and prosperity prevail. The onlooking citizen who catches this vision of the new San Francisco sticks a trowel and a square in his belt, takes a hammer and a saw in his hand, and with burning eyes, set lips and throbbing muscles, starts forward to aid in the reconstruction of the city of vision.

Men of God look upon the waste and ruin wrought in the world by sin, the soul-suffering and general destitution of sin-cursed humanity. They look from this to the vision of redemption and restoration, which stands out upon the pages of prophecy. They catch the Master-spirit. They lay hold upon the means and opportunities for service and with faith and courage go out to assist in the making of all things new and glorious.—A. A. Samson.

ZEAL.

942. Steadfast Eye.

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.
For though, ere yet the shaft is on the wing,
Or when it first forsakes the elastic string,
It err but little from the intended line,
It falls at last far wide of his design;
So he who seeks a mansion in the sky,
Must watch his purpose with a steadfast eye.
That prize belongs to none but the sincere,
The least obliquity is fatal here.
—William Cowper.

943. Christian Enthusiasm.

Once, at Wotton, Rowland Hill was carried away by the impetuous rush of his feelings, and exclaimed:, "Because I am in earnest men call me an enthusiast; but I am not; mine are the words of truth and soberness. I once saw a gravel pit fall in and bury three human beings alive. I shouted so loudly for help that I was heard at the distance of a mile; help came, and rescued two of the poor sufferers. No one called me an enthusiast then; and when I see eternal destruction ready to fall on poor sinners, and about to entomb them irrevocably in an eternal mass of woe, and call aloud to them to escape, shall I be called an enthusiast now?"—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

944. Enthusiasm Needed.

After the battle of Lookout Mountain, when the Federal troops cleared the heights with a dash that was irresistible, General Grant sent to General Wood and asked, "Did you order the charge?" He said, "No." To Hooker and to Sheridan the same inquiry was put, and from them the same response was received. The fact was that the men were filled with such enthusiasm that nothing could have stopped them. They leaped to the fray, defying danger and death, and when the victory was gained, were filled with glad wonder at it. When the Church of Christ is filled with enthusiasm for the conquest of the world it will go forward whether earthly leaders give the word of command or not. — J. Wilbur Chapman.

945. Christian Zeal.

At a missionary meeting in Edinburgh, the Rev. W. C. Bunning related that a friend of his was once riding between Glasgow and Greenock, when the train began to flag, and at length stood still. The gentleman got out, and going up to the engine, said to the driver, "What's the matter? Have you run out of water?" "No," was the reply, "we've plenty of water, but it's not boiling."—R. Brewin.

946. Folded Hands.

Not long ago in New York there was a great fire. The great building was so quickly wrapped in flames that escape seemed to be impossible. The imprisoned people within the structure came to the windows and called for help to be given them. Some became unnerved and threw themselves out from the windows. Heroes developed at that time. Lieutenant Bonner, son of a former fire chief, ascended the almost red-hot fire escape five times. Four times he came down with a woman or a child in his arms. The fifth time he was making for the street with an unconscious woman when his strength gave out. He staggered and would have fallen to death had not a comrade come to his assistance.

As Bonner reached a fourth story window on one of his ascents and dragged a little girl from a window where she stood surrounded by flames, she pleaded with him to let her escape and go in after her little brother, whom she had carried to the window. He had fallen unconscious and was roasting, she said. Bonner jumped through the window, and it seemed to those below as if he was going into a furnace. He found the little boy just inside the window and carried him out. And it is inconceivable that a paid employee of a city should exhibit such heroism as this, simply because the call was emphatic and the need was great, and we should sit with folded hands in Church when all about us the cries are coming to us with equal force.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

947. Compel Them to Come In.

An incident occurred a few years ago at Hyde Park which, it seems to me, illustrated the working church. A crowd stood on the platform waiting for the train. There were judges, men of business, ladies, newspaper boys and bootblacks in the crowd, and on the track was an old man. Soon the rumble of the approaching train was heard, and all at once a scream went up from the people, for that old man on the track. One of the judges, with his paper in his hand, was signalling to the man to get off the track. Some of the ladies were crying. The little bootblacks shouted and swung their kits. The old man did not hear, and finally one, who stood there, rushed out and caught hold of him and pulled him off the track; with no very gentle grasp, to be sure, but he was saved. I did not hear any one say, "How did you like the way in which I presented to that man the reasons for coming off the track?" The ladies didn't say, "How did my train hang, and did my dress look well as I ran across the platform?" Nothing of the kind. The man was saved, and that was all anybody cared for. I have been criticized many times for my way of doing. The other day, a brother spoke of my using my fist clenched, and all those little things. I tell you, my friends, men are on the track, and will be run over and destroyed unless we pull them off, and never mind these little matters as to how we look while we are doing it. Let us keep our minds on this one thing, how to save them from death.—Major Cole.

948. Unconquerable Zeal.

In the year 1786 the ascent of Mont Blanc was first accomplished by Jacques Balmat. When the day arrived on which he was resolved to enter upon the deed of daring, his wife, noting a strange light in his eye and the determined aspect of his countenance, said to him, "Whither goest thou?" And he replied, "In search of crystal." He could not tell his full intent. . . . Over the pine-clad and lower parts of the mountain he passed; then he scaled the rugged rocks, and after that he faced the ice world before him. He tried one way and that would not do; he tried another and that was in vain. Access to the summit seemed impossible. Jacques Balmat, however, kept saying to himself it was not impossible; and at one crucial point in the journey he said to himself: "I will guess if I do not find the way!" That same night he discovered a way up; and . . . planted his foot on the summit of the monarch's crown. From that day Balmat became a guide to lead tourists up the snow-covered mountain which he had first climbed.—Mathetes, in "The Freeman."

CHILDREN.

949. "Run Away, Boy."

Doctor Potter tells the story of a young man who stood at the bar of a court of justice to be sentenced for forgery. The judge had known him from a child, for his father had been a famous legal light and his work on the Law of Trusts was the most exhaustive work on the subject in existence. "Do you remember your father," asked the judge sternly, "that father whom you have disgraced?" The prisoner answered: "I remember him perfectly. When I went to him for advice or companionship, he would look up from his book on the 'Law of Trusts' and say, 'Run away, boy, I am busy.' My father finished his book, and here I am." The great lawyer had neglected his own trust with awful results.—T. De Witt Talmage.

950. Little Lord Fauntleroy.

Some of you may have read a very beautiful children's story called "Little Lord Fauntleroy." The pith of it is just this: A noble, open-hearted boy is thrown into the company of his grandfather, a proud, hard-hearted, selfish, old nobleman, who knows as well as those about him do, what a mean, cynical old tyrant he has been. The earl is thoroughly miserable, only he is too proud to own it. But the lad, who has been brought up in pure and holy ways, insists on thinking well of the old man, attributing to him all sorts of good deeds. In the honest simplicity of his little heart he believes his grandfather to be a very fine man, and says that when he grows up he means to be like him. The trustful love of the boy touches his grandfather's stony heart just as opening spring sunshine touches the winter ice, and it begins to melt; without knowing it the little fellow leads the old man in good ways, and he is won. As to the boy, he is still the merry-hearted fellow he was, not in the least priggish, or goody-goody, or conceited, but he has done a work that shall never die.—E. Medley.

951. "Are the Boys All In?"

"Is it getting night?" said an old Scotch woman ninety-seven years of age. "Husband," she said, "is it getting night?" And her aged Scotch husband by her side, realizing that she was dying, bent down close to her and said, "Yes, Janet, it is getting night." She was wandering a bit and was back in the olden days with her loved ones, but he knew that the end was near. She was still a moment, and then said, "Are the boys all in?" "Yes," he said, "the boys are all in, Janet." The last one had gone home three years before. She was again still a moment more when she said, "I will soon be in." "Yes, Janet, you will soon be in." "And you will soon come too?" she asked. "Yes," he said, "by the grace of God, I will soon come too." She reached out her thin hands in order that she might clasp them round his neck and draw him down by her side as she said, "And He will then shut us all in." "All in." I wonder if you can say it—with the boys all in; the girls all in. It is a sad thing to have a boy that is a wanderer, and a girl that is lost.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

952. Training of Children.

What if God should place in your hand a diamond, and tell you to inscribe on it a sentence which should be read at the last day, and be shown then as an index of your own thoughts and feelings? What care, what caution, would you exercise in the selection! Now, this is what God has done. He has placed before you the immortal minds of your children, more imperishable than the diamond, on which you are about to inscribe every day and every hour, by your instructions, by your spirit, or by your example, something which will remain, and be exhibited for or against you at the judgment day. —Dr. Jayson.

953. Permanence of Early Impressions.

A farmer decided to remove an old beech-tree which grew on his farm. The wood-cutter noticed on the bark of the tree some curious marks looking like the letters J. L., roughly cut, and below them some ornamental design. After the tree had been cut down and was being separated into lengths he was startled to find on the hard, dry wood at the core of the tree, directly opposite the place on the bark where he had noticed the marks, the clearly cut letters J. L., on a dark background, and below them an anchor. On inquiries being made, it was found that the letters were the initials of a sailor named John Leland, who, in an idle hour, had cut them on the beech-tree when it was young. There were thirty-seven rings between the letters and the bark of the tree, and the woodsman said that each ring represented one year's growth of the tree. He inferred that the letters must have been cut in the year 1853, and his belief was confirmed when he learned that it was in that year that the sailor had spent some time in that neighborhood. Thus the inscription had not only remained in the place where it was cut at first, but as each year added to the growth of the tree, the letters still appeared on the surface, scarcely legible there, it is true, but perfectly clear at the core. It is so with human character. Many an old man, in spite of the rough usage of the world and the scars of time and trouble, bears upon his walk and conversation the marks of the handwriting which in his youth God put in his heart.—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

954. Except Henry.

In the home of a pious farmer there hung the well-known motto: "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The motto meant something in that house, for the farmer prayed daily that all might truly serve the Lord. The last clause fitted all the house except the oldest son, who persistently refused to accept Christ. One day the father and son were alone in the room where the motto hung. The father said, "My dear Henry, I can not and will not be a liar any longer. You, who belong to my house, do not want to serve the Lord. Therefore I must add the words 'except Henry'; it hurts me to do it, but I must be true." The thought so impressed the boy that he gave himself to Christ.—The Expositor.

955. Early Habits.

"When I was a little boy," remarked an old man, "somebody gave me a cucumber in a bottle. The neck of the bottle was small and the cucumber so large it wasn't possible for it to pass through, and I wondered how it got there. But out in the garden one day I came to a bottle slipped over a little green fellow, and then I understood. The cucumber had grown in the bottle. And now I often see men with habits that I wonder any strong, sensible man could form, and then I think that most likely they grew into them when they were young, and cannot slip out of them now. They are like the cucumber.—H. F. Sayles.

956. Scandal-Mongers.

Some years ago in one of the hill districts of India, a tigress was killed whose taking off caused rejoicing among the natives. She was known as the maneater who once had given to her whelps a live man to play with. She had carried the man off from a hut in the forest where wood-cutters were sleeping. His companions took refuge in trees and from their places of safety saw the young whelps play with their victim. The man would attempt to crawl away but the whelps would drag him back with claws and teeth, the old tigress looking on and purring with pleasure. Gossipers and scandal-mongers are usually developed in the same way. When people cease to have business of their own they begin to prey on other people. It is also true that the children of a scandal-loving mother are almost certain to develop the same man-eating trait. A bloodthirsty tigress teaching her whelps to play with a live man and thus teaching them how to kill is not an exaggerated illustration of the viciousness of a family brought up to gossip and evil speaking of their neighbors.—Poetry and Morals.

957. Jesus the Friend of Children.

Once there was carried into a great hospital a poor, little, ragged, miserable boy, who had been run over in the streets and dreadfully hurt. And all night he kept crying and groaning in his great pain, and at last a good youth, who lay in the bed next to him, said, "My poor little fellow, won't you pray to Jesus to ease your pain?" But the little wretched sufferer had never heard anything at all about Jesus, and asked who Jesus was. And the youth gently told him that Jesus was Lord of all, and that He had come down to die for us. And the boy answered, "Oh, I can't pray to Him, He's so great and grand, and He would never hear a poor street boy like me; and I don't know how to speak to Him." "Then," said the youth, "won't you just lift your hand to Him out of bed, and when He passes by He will see it, and will know that you want Him to be kind to you, and to ease your pain?" And the poor, crushed, suffering boy lifted out of the bed his little brown hand, and soon afterwards he ceased to groan; and when they came to him in the morning the hand and the poor thin arm were still uplifted, but they were stiff and cold; for Jesus had indeed seen it, and heard that mute prayer of the agony of that strayed lamb of His fold, and He had grasped the little, soiled, trembling hand of the sufferer, and had taken him away to that better, happier home, where He will love also to make room for you and me, if we seek Him with all our hearts, and try to do His will.—F. W. Farrar, D.D.

958. Father's Advice to Son.

Charles Dickens once addressed a letter to his son Henry while he was at college, advising him to keep out of debt and confide all his perplexities to his father. The letter concluded as follows: "I most strongly and affectionately impress upon you the priceless value of the New Testament, and the study of that book as the one unfailing guide in life. Deeply respecting it, and bowing down before the character of our Saviour, you cannot go very wrong, and will always preserve at heart a true spirit of veneration and humility. Similarly, I impress upon you the habit of saying a Christian prayer every night and morning. These things have stood by me all through my life, and remember that I tried to render the New Testament intelligible to you and lovable by you when a mere baby. And so God bless you!"—Homilist.

959. Cradles and Crowns.

"Show me a man's cradle, and I will show you his destiny," said an eminent clergyman after spending a day at the Tombs Police Court in New York. So large a proportion of the criminality there unveiled had its undoubted origin in unhallowed homes that he felt himself justified in making this sweeping generalization. There is much reason in it, yet it is too fatalistic by half. It assigns a disproportionate place to those factors which are so greatly overworked in our modern social theory—heredity and environment. It ignores the power of self-determination, which is man's noblest endowment. It is contradicted by numerous biographies. So many persons have risen from obscurity to prominence, from squalor to affluence, from baseness to nobility, that it is unsafe to make the circumstances of birth the prophecy of any career.

There is a less hazardous way of predicting destiny than to look into a cradle. Ascertain a man's dominant motive, after he has put aside the garments of childhood, and has begun to think and act for himself; discover the regulative principle of his conduct, and you will be able to make an almost infallible estimate of his future.—Rev. G. P. Eckman.

960. Saving His Own Boy.

Through Rochester, N. Y., runs the Genesee River, between steep and crooked banks. On one occasion a gentleman, who lived in the city, had just arrived by train from a journey. He was anxious to go home and meet his wife and children. He was hurrying along the streets, with a bright vision of home in his mind, when he saw on the bank of the river a lot of excited men. "What is the matter?" he shouted. They replied, "A boy's in the water." "Why don't you save him?" he asked. In a moment, throwing down his carpetbag and pulling off his coat, he jumped into the stream, grasped the boy in his arms, struggled with him to the shore, and, as he wiped the water from his dripping face and brushed back the hair, he exclaimed: "Heaven, it is my boy!" He plunged in for the boy of somebody else and saved his own. He had received "good measure, pressed down," for a courageous and humane action.—Treasury.

FATHER.

961. Wealth of Manhood.

A Highland chieftain on a visit to England was taunted with the poverty of his country, at the table of his host, the occasion being when the large silver candlesticks were lighted in the spacious hall of the English castle, and in a gust of mistaken patriotism (common enough in a Scot) the Highlander declared he had seen better candlesticks in his own castle in Scotland. A wager was put up, and he could not draw back. The laird's brother, who understood the terrific fix his brother was in, placed at the table on either side a gigantic Highlander holding in his right hand a drawn sword and in his left a blazing torch, and ere the strangers had recovered from their surprise, he said: "Behold the chandeliers of my brother's house! Not one of these men knows any law but loyalty. Would you compare to these the riches of gold? How say you, How say you, cavaliers, is your wager won or lost?" —H. Black, M.A.

962. Godly Father.

One of Principal Rainy's daughters writes: "I feel it difficult to write of these things, for I have no words to tell you of them. To us he was just 'father.' I suppose most children begin by thinking their father the most wise and strong and tender of beings, and with us that went on to the very end, with an always increasing sense of how unusual such wisdom and strength and tenderness were. For myself, it is to him I owe all my earliest ideas of what the Fatherhood of God might mean. They all came translated to me so inevitably, so securely, through that dear and familiar medium that never once failed me all my life—never once came short of my hopes or my needs. And it was so with us all. I remember how a sister once wrote to me, 'I know you read the thirteenth verse of the 103rd Psalm as I do—Like as my Father pitieth his children—and that means just everything."—Rev. W. W. Landrum, D.D.

963. Sanctuary in the Home.

An ideal picture of the father as the high priest in the home is given by John G. Paton, the South Sea missionary, in the story of his childhood's days in the south of Scotland. "Our home consisted of a 'but' and a 'ben', and a 'mid room,' or chamber, called the 'closet.' The 'closet' was a very small apartment betwixt the other two, having room only for a bed, a little table, and a chair, with a diminutive window shedding diminutive light on the scene. This was the Sanctuary of that cottage home. Thither daily, and oftentimes a day, generally after each meal, we saw our father retire, and 'shut-to the door'; and we children got to understand by a sort of spiritual instinct (for the thing was too sacred to be talked about) that prayers were being poured out there for us, as of old by the High Priest within the veil in the Most Holy Place. We occasionally heard the pathetic echoes of a trembling voice pleading as if for life, and we learned to slip out and in past that door on tiptoe, not to disturb the holy colloquy. The outside world might not know, but we knew, whence came that happy light as of a new-born smile that was always dawning on my father's face; it was a reflection from the Divine Presence, in the consciousness of which he lived."

964. Godless Husbands.

I must tell you of a touching (and it struck me peculiarly Northumbrian) saying I heard the other day from a poor old woman who wished her paralytic husband to be allowed a seat near the pulpit on the Communion Sunday, as he is deaf and does not go to church, and is, indeed, a Deist (very common in Blandford), but she thought seeing the tables covered might do him good. "For eh!" she said in a faltering voice, almost in tears, "it is a lovely sight." Poor body, I could have cried myself to think of all she has probably passed through for that man, praying, as she said, night and morning for him, and he now old and almost out of hail with his infirmities.—Marcus Dods.

965. Father's Call.

Major Whittle used to tell the story of the aged Quaker named Hartmann, whose son had enlisted in the army. There came the news of a dreadful battle, and this old father, in fear and trembling, started to the scene of conflict that he might learn something concerning his boy. The officer of the day told him that he had not answered to his name, and that there was every reason to believe that he was dead. This did not satisfy the father, so, leaving headquarters, he started across the battlefield, looking for the one who was dearer to him than life. He would stoop down and turn over the face of this one and then the face of another, but without success. The night came on, and then with a lantern he continued his search, all to no purpose. Suddenly the wind, which was blowing a gale, extinguished his lantern, and he stood there in the darkness hardly knowing what to do until his father's ingenuity, strength and affection prompted him to call out his son's name, and so he stood and shouted, "John Hartmann, thy father calleth thee." All about him he would hear the groans of the dying and some one saying: "Oh, if that were only my father." He continued his cry with more pathos and power until at last in the distance he heard his boy's voice crying tremblingly, "Here, father."

The old man made his way across the field shouting out, "Thank God! Thank God!" Taking him in his arms, he bore him to headquarters, nursed him back to health and strength, and he lives to-day. Over the battlefield of the slain this day walks Jesus Christ, the Son of God, crying out to all who are wrecked by this awful power, "Thy Father calleth thee," and if there should be but the faintest response to his cry he would take the lost in his arms and bear them home to heaven. Will you not come while He calls to-day?—J. Wilbur Chapman.

966. John Paton's Farewell.

When John Paton, who afterwards became the great missionary, was leaving home, there lay before him a walk of about forty miles. His father walked with him for about six miles, and then they parted. The father and son loved each other dearly, and the parting scene was full of sorrow sweetened by deep affection. "God bless you, my son! your father's God prosper you and keep you from all evil," said the tender-hearted father. After going some distance John climbed a high piece of ground to see if his father was still watching him. At the same moment his father climbed the dyke to see his boy. John watched him climb down. "I watched," he said, "through blinding tears, till his form faded from my gaze; and then hastening on my way, vowed deeply and oft, by the help of God, to live and act so as never to grieve or dishonour such a father and a mother as He had given me."—H. F. Sayles.

967. Father Holding the Rope.

On a dangerous cliff stood a little company of rescuers planning how they might let down someone over the precipice to search for one who was lost and carry to him the rope with which he might be rescued. They wanted to use a little shepherd lad, but he drew back unwilling to go until he saw his father coming, when he said: "Yes, I will go if father holds the rope." We need not hesitate to go down into the depths of this world to try and find and save the lost as long as we know that our Father holds the rope. He will supply the strength to keep us and bring us back safely.—H. F. Sayles.

968. Family Mistake.

There is no place where a man's religion is so valuable as in his own home. Many a man appears very religious on Sunday, but if you could see him at home with his family, at the table, or when he loses his temper over some trivial thing, you would not wonder when he says he cannot do personal work. And it would not do any good for him to speak to his own children about becoming Christians. A man in Iowa had been storming at his family, especially at his poor wife, one day, until he had spoiled the pleasure of everything in the home for that day at least. Then he went out, slamming the door behind him. His little boy stood off at one side, listening to it all. He looked into his mother's face and tearful eyes, and coming across the room, took her hands in his own and exclaimed: "Mother, we made an awful mistake when we married father, didn't we?"—R. A. Torrey.

MOTHER.

969. Mother's Example.

Two boys, who were attending Harvard University, went to hear

Bob Ingersoll. Walking away from the lecture, one of them said to the other: "Jim, didn't old Bob mop Christianity off the earth tonight?" And Jim replied: "I don't know. I am inclined to think my good old Christian mother is left yet, and I wouldn't give her, with her sweet Christian life and example, for all the Bob Ingersolls that could be crowded on the earth."—Sam Jones.

970. Mother's Opportunity.

Some years ago I was passing through Mt. Auburn cemetery at Cambridge, Mass. I was looking for the graves of the distinguished dead, when my attention was called to a humble little mound with a little grass and shrubbery about it. The thing that drew me to it was the peculiarity of the head stone. A very uninviting piece of marble, and on it was the picture of a hand with a finger pointing upward, and across it was written, "Mother."

This was enough to tell me a great story of love, and self-sacrifice, and toil, and Christian faithfulness. Her life had been a signboard, pointing upward to God and heaven. Oh, may it be true of every mother reading this, that her life shall be a signboard, directing those who come within her influence to things that are better than life!—L. G. Broughton.

971. God Forgotten.

A Glasgow minister was sitting on a coach beside the driver on a lonely Highland road, and saw in the distance an old woman, who looked wistfully toward the coach. As it came near her face showed by turns anxiety, hope, and fear, and as the coach passed, the driver, with downcast eyes and sad expression, shook his head, and she returned disappointed to her cottage. Being much affected by what he saw, the minister asked an explanation of the driver. The driver said that for several years she had watched daily for the coach, expecting either to see her son or to receive a letter from him. The son had gone to one of our great cities, and had forgotten the mother who loved him so dearly. But the mother went every day to meet the coach, trusting that one day her son would return to her. Such a tale makes our hearts bleed for the parent who was cruelly forsaken, but many forget how badly they are treating their heavenly Father when they forsake Him and refuse to return to Him.—J. Bibb.

972. Mother's Reward.

It is a great compliment to a woman to have a great son. I remember an incident that took place at a certain village, which impressed this upon my mind as nothing else could. It was commencement. A young man was to graduate who stood at the head of his class, and received many honors. He was of humble parentage. It had cost quite a good deal of struggle and sacrifice on the part of his parents to keep him at school. When he delivered his graduating speech, his old mother, with her sunbonnet on, sat just in front of him. No sooner had he finished speaking, and received his medal, than he stepped down off the platform, went and placed his arms around his mother's neck, and pinned his medal on her dress.

Some one said to her, as they went out of the hall: "I know you are proud of your boy."

"Ah, yes," said the young man, "but not half so proud as he is of his mother!"

What woman would desire to be

greater than to have a great son? I confess to you when I see the ambitions of women to ape men, and ofttime displace them, and do the work which they do, and wear the honors which they wear, I feel like hiding my face in perpetual shame. The greatest ambition that ever throbbed in a woman's heart is to give the world a great man. Then up with your heads, mothers! Your lot may have been hard, and ofttimes you have been discouraged, but still fortune may perch upon your banner.—L. G. Broughton.

973. Most Beautiful Woman.

"Mother does not look as she used to," said a young man to a friend as they were going away together, after a call on her. "When I was a boy they called her the handsomest woman in the community. But father was sick for a long time, and my brother and I were both ill, and father and brother died. Mother had to manage things and work very hard, and carry a heavy load to get me through college. It has stooped her shoulders, and left wrinkles on her cheeks and forehead, as well as whitened her hair. But," and here his eyes filled with tears and his voice broke with emotion as he continued, "to me she is the most beautiful woman in the whole world, for every wrinkle reminds me of the load she carried all for me."—Christian Advocate.

974. Henry Grady and His Mother.

That nobly gifted editor of Atlanta, Georgia, Henry Grady, a great publicist, a thrilling orator, a humanity-serving citizen, one of the South's most honored sons, got far away, right in the zenith of his power and popularity, from Christ. Like many others similarly situated, he neglected the things of Christ and drifted with the tide. Far back yonder when he was a boy, he made a profession of religion, and for a while observed the religious habits, but when his remarkable fame and career came on, he neglected the Christian life, and went drifting with the tide. They told me, when I was speaking in Atlanta some years ago, this beautiful chapter out of his great life. When he had made one of his loftiest speeches, on one occasion, and plaudits from North, South, East, and West were coming to him on every wire, he slipped out of the office of the *Constitution,* his daily paper in Atlanta, saying to his associates as he left: "You need not know where I am, but I am going to find mother to-night in the little home. I have something to say to her. I will be back in the morning. You need not know where I am." And he took an out-of-the-way road to his mother's cottage, and when he reached it, he said to his mother: "Mother, all these plaudits, all this fame, all this notoriety, all this popularity, all this applause—these do not satisfy my heart. Mother, I once thought that I was a Christian, but if I was I have got far away from God, and I have come back, mother, to ask you if I may not kneel down at your knee, and be a little boy again, like I was when I was at home with you, and say my simple prayer, like I used to say it every day when the day was done. And then, when I have said my prayer like that, I wonder if you won't take me to my bed, and tuck the cover around me, just like you used to do when I was a little boy, and then, when you have tucked the cover around me, if you won't bend down over me and pray for your little boy, for God to teach him and guide him and help him, just like you used to pray for me when I was a little boy." And that is exactly what happened in that little home that night. Great Henry Grady knelt at his mother's knee like he used to do as a little boy, and said his simple, boyish prayer, like he used to say it long years before, and then his dear old mother escorted him to his room and bed, and she tucked the cover about him, and bent over him, with tears and prayers, commending her boy to the great Saviour. And then she kissed him, like she used to do, and left him alone. And in the gray of the early morning Henry Grady came from his room, and found his mother, and there was a light on his face fair like the morning light, and he said: "Mother, I was a little child last night, and felt out after Jesus, and He met me and has spoken peace to my poor, wandering heart."—George W. Truett, D.D.

975. Mother's Enduring Love.

It is said that an angel strolled out of heaven one beautiful day and found his way to this old world. He roamed through field and city beholding the varied scenes of nature and art, and just at sunset he plumed his golden wings and said: "I must return to the world of light; shall I not take with me some mementoes of my visit here? How beautiful and fragrant those flowers are! I will pluck of them a choice bouquet." Passing a country home where he saw through the open door a rosy-cheeked baby, smiling up from the little crib into its mother's face, he said: "The smile of that baby is prettier than these roses; I will take that, too." Just then he looked beyond the cradle and saw a devout mother pouring out her love like the gush of a perpetual fountain, as she stopped to kiss "Good-night" her precious baby. "Oh," said he, "that mother's love is the prettiest thing I have seen in all the world; I will take that, too." With these three treasures he winged his way toward the pearly gates, but just before entering he decided to examine his mementoes, and to his astonishment the flowers had withered until they were no longer things of beauty, the baby's smile had changed into a frown, but the mother's love retained all its pristine beauty and fragrance. He threw aside the withered roses and the departed smile, and, passing through the gates, was welcomed by the hosts of heaven that gathered about him to see what he had brought from his long journey. "Here," said he, "is the only thing I found on earth that would retain its fragrance and beauty all the way to heaven. The sweetest thing in all the world is a mother's love."—O. A. Newlin, D.D.

976. Mother Cares.

There came to my office one day an old lady with white hair, starved features, and tottering steps, leaning upon a cane. There was a scared, timid look on her careworn face as she sank heavily into a chair and told me her pathetic story. It was very simple. An utterly debauched and worthless son, who for thirty years had brought nothing but sorrow to the heart of his mother, had been arrested for an assault from which his victim had died. He was lying in jail awaiting trial. The bruised heart of the aged mother yearned for her boy, for he was still a boy to her. In a moment of indignation at what seemed to me outraged affection, I asked: "Why do you not leave him alone? He does not care for you." Her eyes filled afresh with tears, her head sank lower, as she answered with infinite tenderness, "No, I know he does not care for me, but I care for him, and he cannot have a mother long."

—G. L. Perin.

977. His Mother's Question.

"Yes, I saw considerable of John," said the member of the family who had been away among friends. "John is getting on in the world." There was a moment's pause, and then the gray-haired mother by the fireside asked, "Which world?"—Sunday School Times.

978. Opened Door and Listening Ears.

Dr. John Paton, the great missionary to the New Hebrides, tells us in his autobiography a very tender incident. He tells us that his brother Walter was a sailor, that he went to sea when quite a young lad, and that after a voyage or two no more was heard of him. The sea has great secrets to tell some day. But that mother's heart could never conclude that she would never see her boy's face again. At least she resolved that, should he ever come by day or by night, there would be a welcome for him at the old fireside. And so the last thing she did every night before she retired to rest was to take the door off the latch and leave it open to admit the lost boy. Should he ever come, even in the midnight, there was to be no bar against his entrance. And that mother's heart was only a faint picture of what the great Father's heart is in Jesus Christ.—Rev. William M. Curry, D.D.

979. Loved His Mother.

The following is a sketch, full of touching interest, of a little ragged newsboy who had lost his mother. In the tenderness of his affection for her he was determined that he would raise a stone to her memory.

His mother and he had kept house together and they had been all to each other, but now she was taken, and the little fellow's loss was irreparable. Getting a stone was no easy task, for his earnings were small; but love is strong. Going to a cutter's yard and finding that even the cheaper class of stones was far too expensive for him, he at length fixed upon a broken shaft of marble, part of the remains of an accident in the yard, and which the proprietor kindly named at such a low figure that it came within his means. There was much yet to be done but the brave little chap was equal to it.

The next day he conveyed the stone away on a little four-wheeled cart, and managed to have it put in position. The narrator, curious to know the last of the stone, visited the cemetery one afternoon, and he thus describes what he saw and learned:

"Here it is," said the man in charge, and, sure enough, there was our monument, at the head of one of the newer graves. I knew it at once. Just as it was when it left our yard, I was going to say, until I got a little nearer to it and saw what the little chap had done. I tell you, boys, when I saw it there was something blurred my eyes, so's I couldn't read it at first. The little man had tried to keep the lines straight, and evidently thought that capitals would make it look better and bigger, for nearly every letter was a capital. I copied it, and here it is; but you want to see it on the stone to appreciate it:

MY MOTHER
SHEE DIED LAST WEAK
SHEE WAS ALL I HAD. SHEE
SED SHEAD BEE WAITING
FUR——

And here the boy's lettering stopped. After a while I went back to the man in charge and asked him what further he knew of the little fellow who brought the stone. "Not much," he said; "not much. Didn't you notice a fresh little grave near the one with the stone? Well, that's where he is. He came here every afternoon for some time working away at that stone, and one day I missed him, and then for several days. Then the man came out from the church that had buried the mother and ordered the grave dug by her side. I asked if it was for the little chap. He said it was. The boy had sold all his papers one day, and was hurrying along the street out this way. There was a runaway team just above the crossing, and—well—he was run over, and lived but a day or two. "He had in his hand when he was picked up an old file sharpened down to a point, that he did all the lettering with. They said he seemed to be thinking only of that until he died, for he kept saying, "I didn't get it done, but she'll know I meant to finish it, won't she? I'll tell her so, for she'll be waiting for me," and he died with those words on his lips. When the men in the cutter's yard heard the story of the boy next day, they clubbed together, got a good stone, inscribed upon it the name of the newsboy, which they succeeded in getting from the superintendent of the Sunday School which the little fellow attended, and underneath it the touching words: "He loved his mother."—J. Wilbur Chapman.

980. Mother's Scars.

In the city of New York there was a mother who saved her little girl, ten years of age, when she was in a burning building. The mother's hands were protected, and her body was protected, but her face was unprotected and it was badly burned. Not with all the skill of New York physicians could she be restored to anything like her former comeliness. She was horrible to see. She always went around her home and in the streets of our city with a veiled face. One day she went to one of the Sixth Avenue elevated stations and was waiting for a train when a company of school-girls came in. The opening of the door caused a gust of wind to pass through the station. It lifted her veil and threw it back. Before she could recover herself the school-girls saw her disfigured countenance. One girl was her own child, and when the girls stepped back in horror as they looked on that face, this girl failed to acknowledge her mother or to speak to her. You shudder at that, but I think it is a small thing in comparison with the sin against God. He is infinite in His love, marvelous in His compassion, endless in His mercy. And you have sinned against God. "Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ is necessary."—J. Wilbur Chapman.

981. Mother's Touch.

Nowhere is a mother's hand and a mother's voice forgotten. During our late Civil War a mother was telegraphed: "Come to the front. Your boy is seriously wounded." She left on the first train, and when she arrived where her boy was being cared for, the lady of the home met her at the door, and was asked if a wounded soldier boy was in the house. "Yes," the lady replied, "and we are expecting his mother." "I am his mother," she said, "where is my boy?" "He is in his room. The doctors are in there now, but they will be out in a moment or two." Directly the doctors came out, and she introduced herself, but they said: "We are glad you have come, but you mustn't go in where your boy is. His fever is so high, and his nervous system on such a tension that if you walked into his room, the excitement of seeing you, his mother, might produce death. We will be back early in the morning, and we will let you know when you can see him." The mother stayed in the adjoining room all night listening to the cries and moans of her poor wounded boy. But in the morning the doctors only said: "You can't see your boy this morning. He is still delirious, and it would be a dangerous thing to let you into his room." But when they all went away, she slipped down the hall with the tread of a cat, and she went in at the open door of her boy's room, and stole past the nurse to the side of his bed. She stood there a moment, listened to his cries, watched the nervous twitching of his body, and then she began to stroke his forehead with her hand. Her boy passed off into a quiet sleep, and the nervous twitching all stopped. He lay perfectly quiet for a moment, and then he said, without moving his position, "Oh, how like my mother's hand!"—Sam Jones.

982. "I'll Take Care of Mother."

"I used to think that I had to take care of the Bible. I thought it might go down unless I defended it. I don't feel that way any more. On one occasion I was going away from home and said to my little four-year-old boy, "You must take care of mamma while I am gone." That night in his prayer, he said: "Bless grandma and take care of her; bless little sister and take care of her; as for mamma, I'll take care of her myself." What folly for us to imagine that we are taking care of the very power that is taking care of us!—Dr. A. C. Dixon.

983. Mother's Light.

A very beautiful story is related of a boat out at sea carrying in it a father and his little daughter. As they were steering for the shore they were overtaken by a violent storm, which threatened to destroy them. The coast was dangerous. The mother lighted a lamp and started up the worn stairway to the attic window. "It won't do any good, mother," the son called after her. But the mother went up, put the light in the window, knelt beside it and prayed. Out in the storm the daughter saw a glimmer of gold on the water's edge. "Steer for that," the father said. Slowly but steadily, they came toward the light, and at last were anchored in the little sheltered cottage by the harbor.

"Thank God!" cried the mother, as she heard their glad voices, and came down the stairway with a lamp in her hand. "How did you get here?" she said.

"We steered by mother's light," answered the daughter, "although we did not know what it was out there."

"Ah," thought the boy, a wayward boy, "it is time I was steering by my mother's light." And ere he slept he surrendered himself to God and asked him to guide him over life's rough sea. Months went by, and disease smote him. "He can't live long," was the verdict of the doctor; and one stormy night he lay dying. "Do not be afraid for me," he said, as they wept; "I shall make the harbor, for I am steering by my mother's light."—"Sent of God."

984. Mother's Message.

One of the last Sundays I spent at the Bethany Sunday School in Philadelphia, an Englishman was there and spoke to the scholars. He sat down and told me this story: A young girl had run away from home and was living a life of sin, and her mother wanted my friend to help her find her daughter. And he said: "Go home and bring me every picture you have, and I will find her." She brought them to him, and he just dipped his pen in the ink and wrote down beneath the sweet face these words: "Come back." Then he took those pictures down into the haunts of sin, and the mission stations, and left them there. Not long after, this daughter was going into a place of sin and there she saw the face of her mother. The tears ran down her face so that at first she could not see the words beneath, but she brushed away the tears and looked and there they were, "Come back." She went out to her old home at the edge of London and, when she put her hand on the latch, the door was open and when she stepped in her mother, with her arms about her, said: "My dear child, the door has never been fastened since you went away." And that is true for you with God; the door has never been closed since you went away, it is wide open.

I lift up before you this morning a face sweeter than any mother's face. The prophets tried to tell you about it and they said, "Fairer than the sons of men and altogether lovely," and just below that face I write the words, "Come back." "Go tell His disciples, and Peter." Will you come? God grant it!—J. Wilbur Chapman.

985. Power of Mother's Love.

William Stokes (afterwards of the "Masters of Medicine") was apparently by nature indolent and apathetic. . . . This caused his parents and especially his mother much anxious thought. One day while in his favourite retreat (in a beech hedge), where he read romances and poetry, he fell asleep, but was awakened by some warm drops falling on his face. He started up and saw his mother bending over him. . . . Stung with remorse . . . his nature appeared to undergo an immediate and salutary change, and the dreamy, indolent boy suddenly became the ardent enthusiastic student.—"Life and Work of W. Stokes."

986. Love Never Faileth.

A daring story has been told of a young Frenchman who loved a courtesan. This woman hated her lover's mother, and when, in his passion, he offered her any gift in return for her love, she answered: "Bring me then your mother's bleeding heart." And he, in his madness, killed his mother and, plucking out her heart, hurried by night through the streets, carrying it to the cruel woman to whom he had given his soul. But as he went he stumbled and fell, and from the bleeding heart came an anxious voice: "My son, are you hurt?" Not even murder could kill that mother's love; it lived on in the torn heart. And this is the message of the Cross.—United Methodist.

987. Homesick.

One of the first operations performed in the city of Chicago for appendicitis was performed on a young New Englander who was in Chicago on business. He was taken to one of the largest hospitals. This young fellow came from the state of Vermont, where the springs are abundant, and it is a beautiful thing, as I very well know, when you are thirsty, to get down on your knees and dip your face in the water of the spring. When the operation was over, and this young Vermonter was coming out from the anæsthetic, they saw his lips move, and the nurse, bending over, heard him say, "Water." She said, "Doctor, may I give him a drink?" But when she brought it he would not take it, and they heard him whisper again, "I want a drink of water." The doctor bent over him and said, "Is it water you want? There is water right here." By this time the young man was beginning to gain consciousness, and as he looked up into the doctor's face with a smile, he said: "It is not this water that I want. I want a drink from the spring at my mother's door, back in Vermont." It was not water he wanted at all, he wanted his mother. He wanted to feel the touch of her hand upon his face.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

988. Angel in the Home.

When Abraham Lincoln received the telegram announcing his nomination for President of the United States, he arose, put on his hat and coat, and said to his friends: "There is a little woman at home who would like to hear this." And he went off to spend the evening with her. Dark days when death had entered their home came in after years, and it was this sympathy between them that helped them to bear what God's providence had sent.—H. F. Sayles.

989. Helpfulness.

One wintry day Hawthorne, the American author, went home with a heavy heart, having lost his government appointment. He cast himself down, as men generally do under such circumstances, and assumed the very attitude of despondency. His wife soon discovered the cause of his distress. But instead of indulging in irrational hysterics, she kindled a bright fire, brought pen, ink, and paper, and then, lovingly laying her hand on his shoulder, exclaimed, as she gazed cheerfully in his face, "Now you can write your book." The word wrought like a magic spell. He set to work, forgot his loss, wrote his book, made his reputation, and amassed a fortune. God-fearing women, go and do likewise!—W. J. Acomb.

990. Mother's Songs.

Often and often my thoughts go back
Like wanderers over a timeworn track
To the time when I knelt at my mother's knee
And she sang at the twilight hour to me.

Oh, the dear old songs! I can see her eyes
Aglow with the gladness of paradise,
As I fancy she sings in the streets of gold
The hymns that she sang in the days of old.

As she sang them over, her face
grew bright,
As if God's city was just in sight,
And she saw the angels, and heard
them sing
By the great white throne, before
the King.

The heavenly songs can no sweeter
be
Than the songs that my mother
made dear to me,
And in God's city I hope, some
day,
To hear them sung in my mother's
way.
—Eben E. Rexford.

991. The Old Home.

"There's an old-fashioned house, in
an old-fashioned street,
In a quaint little old-fashioned
town;
There's a street where the cobble-
stones harass the feet,
As it struggles up-hill and then
down.

"And, though to and fro through
the world I must go,
My heart, while it beats in my
breast,
Where'er I may roam, to that old-
fashioned home
Will fly like a bird to its nest.

"In that old-fashioned house, in
that old-fashioned street,
Dwell a dear little old-fashioned
pair;
I can see their two faces so tender
and sweet,
And I love every wrinkle that's
there."

HEAVEN.

992. Get Ready.

A mother was explaining to her little girl the death of her father. The mother said: "God has sent for your father, and will send for us, but I do not know just when." Finally the little girl said: "If we do not know just when God is going to send for us, do you not think we had better pack up and get ready to go? God might send when we are not ready."—Selected.

993. Make Your Reservation.

Some years ago a party of sightseers were traveling together in England, and arrived at an English hotel, but found that it had been full for days. They were turning away to seek accommodation elsewhere, when a lady of the party bade the others adieu, and expressed her intention of remaining. "How can that be?" they asked, "when you hear the hotel is full?" "Oh," she replied, "I telegraphed on ahead a number of days ago, and my room is secured." My friend, send on your name ahead, and the door of Heaven can never be shut against you. Be sure it is a wise precaution. Then everything will be ready for you. And when the journey of life is over, you will mount up as with angel wings, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

—D. L. Moody.

994. Preparation for Heaven.

A man dreamed that he stood beside the guarded gate of heaven, when the spirit of a rich man came and sought admittance on the ground of his wealth and local fame. He was reminded that those things belong to time only, and turned away in despair. Another sought entrance on the ground of his integrity, but was repulsed by the angel, saying: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." A third pleaded his denominational zeal, fervent prayers, and deep feeling, but was refused with the remark, "There is no name given under heaven, or among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus." At length, a spirit was seen winging its way through the air, all the while crying, "The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin." To it the gates of heaven flew wide open, and the angel said: "An abundant entrance is ministered to you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—New Cyclopedia of Illustrations.

995. Better House.

The Rev. G. H. C. MacGregor once related how an old Aberdeen minister was comforted a century ago by a little personal incident. He had always feared death, and was powerless to comfort others facing it. Toward the end of his life he moved house. Yet when the furniture had all gone the old preacher lingered in the home where his children had been born and where his sermons had been prepared. At last his servant came to him and said: "Sir, everything's gone; and the new house is better than this one. Come away!" It preached to him a lesson which he never forgot. God has prepared for His children a home "much better than this,"—"a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—Sunday School Chronicle.

996. Hope of Heaven.

On a cold, windy day in November, a gentleman spoke kindly to a poor Italian whom he had often passed without a word. Seeing him shiver, he said something about the dreadful English climate, which, to a son of the sunny south, must have seemed terribly cruel that day. But to his surprise the man looked up with a smile, and in his broken English said, "Yes, yes, pritty cold; but by-and-by! tink of dat." He was thinking of warm skies and flowers and songs in the sunny land to which he hoped soon to return, and he little imagined how all that day and for many a day his words would ring in the Englishman's heart: "By-and-by, tink of dat."—Alfred Rowland.

997. Do You Expect to Reach Heaven?

Many years ago an American whale ship was in the South Seas. A monster of the deep getting wounded, ran out the distance of a mile by way of getting a run race, and returning, struck the ship with such tremendous force that she began to fill and to sink. The sea was like glass. The crew were not only far from land, but far from the track of ships, so that there was no probability of rescue until they could regain those latitudes through which the thoroughfare of nations runs. The mandate was given, all went busily to work, and the boats were quickly filled with the necessaries of life. The deck was nearly level with the water when the boats moved away for safety. When about one hundred yards away, two men jumped into the sea, went into the sinking ship, and disappeared down the hatchway. They were after "one thing," and, grasping it with a death-grip, returned to the boats with it in their hands. They appeared to value it more than life. It was the compass. It was only "one thing," but vastly important, because their safety and lives depended upon having it in their possession.—F. Andrews.

998. Compensations of Life.

I know a little cottage which is surrounded by great and stately trees, clothed with dense and massy foliage. In the summer days, and through all the sunny season, it just nestles in the circle of green, and has no vision of the world beyond. But the winter comes, so cold and keen. It brings its sharp knife of frost, cuts off the leaves, until they fall trembling to the ground. There is nothing left but the bare framework on which summer hung her beauteous growths. Poor little cottage, with the foliage all gone! But is there no compensation? Yes, Yes. Standing in the cottage in the winter time and looking out of the window, you can see a mansion, which has come into view through the openings left by the fallen leaves. The winter brought the vision of the mansion. My brother, you were surrounded by the summer green of prosperity. It had become your king. There your vision ended. But the Lord wished to give your thought a further reach. He wanted your soul to see "the mansion which the Father has prepared" for them that love Him. So He took away your little king. He sent the winter and stripped your trees; and "in the year that the little king died you saw the Lord."—J. H. Jowett.

999. Full Reward.

I have a friend who was in the Crimean War. He told me that he had that day received a medal with "Inkerman" upon it, for that was his battle; but he said the most touching part of it all was the experience of a friend of his who fought by his side. A cannon ball took off one of his legs, but the brave fellow sprang up immediately and, taking hold of a tree, drew his sword, and was ready to fight even to death. Immediately another cannon ball came crashing past and took off the other leg. They carried him wounded, bleeding, and (as they supposed) dying, to the hospital. Strangely enough he came back to life again. When the day came for the awarding of the medals, they carried him upon his stretcher before her majesty, the Queen. To the other soldiers she had simply given the medals by the hands of her secretary, but when she saw this man carried in on a stretcher, his face so thin and pale, she rose from her seat, stooped down by his side, and with her own hands pinned the medal upon his breast, while the tears fell like rain upon the face of the brave soldier.

Thus I trust it will be with many of us. We shall come into His presence, stand face to face with Him, and He will rise from His throne, coming forward to receive us. As we look up into His face, thrones will vanish away and crowns will be as nothing, for to see Him in all His beauty will be the full reward.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

1000. Brother's Hand.

Chaplain McCabe had a brother who, after forty years of thraldom to strong drink, was finally, through the faith and love and perseverance of his hopeful brother, redeemed from the sad slavery. The chaplain used to say, "When I get to Heaven, I am going to take my brother by the hand and lead him up to my mother and say: 'Mother, here's George; I have brought him home!' Nothing will save a vast multitude of men unless their fellows, in love and faith, help them to fight their battles through to a victory.—The Brooklyn Eagle.

1001. Nearing Home.

It was stormy from shore to shore, without a single fair day. But the place to which we were going was my home; there was my family; there was my church; there were my friends, who were as dear to me as my own life. And I lay perfectly happy in the midst of sickness and nausea. All that the boat could do to me could not keep down the exultation and joy which rose up in me. For every single hour was carrying me nearer and nearer to the spot where was all that I loved in the world. It was deep, dark midnight when we ran into Halifax. I could see nothing. Yet the moment we came into still water I rose from my berth and got up on the deck. And as I sat near the smokestack while they were unloading the cargo, upon the wharf I saw the shadow of a person, apparently going backward and forward near me. At last the thought occurred to me, "Am I watched?" Just then the person addressed me, saying: "Is this Mr. Beecher?" "It is," I replied. "I have a telegram for you from your wife." I had not realized that I had struck the continent where my family were. There, in the middle of the night, and in darkness, the intelligence that I had a telegram from home—I cannot tell you what a thrill it sent through me! We are all sailing home; and, by and by, when we are not thinking of it, some shadowy thing (men call it death), at midnight, will pass by, and will call us by name, and will say, "I have a message for you from home; God waits for you." Are they worthy of anything but pity who are not able to bear the hardships of the voyage? It will not be long before you, and I, and every one of us will hear the messenger sent to bring us back to heaven. It is pleasant to me to think that we are wanted there. I am thankful to think that God loves in such a way that He yearns for me—yes, a great deal more than I do for Him.—H. W. Beecher.

1002. Certain of the Place.

The late Dr. John McFerrin, who in his day was a tower of strength among the Methodists of the South, was lying on his deathbed calmly awaiting the summons to come up higher. His son, who had charge of a circuit twenty miles away, was by his bedside, and when Saturday came was reluctant to leave his dying father, as his Sabbath duties seemed to require. Whereupon the venerable minister said: "My son, I feel a little stronger, and you had better return and fill your appointment to-morrow. If, while you are away, John, I should happen to slip off, you know where to find me."—The Sunday Circle.

1003. Only One Paradise for Man.

It is said that Mahomet approached Damascus, and when he stood to view the dazzling spectacle of that royal city, amid the beautiful plain, he turned aside and left the prospect, saying: "It is given to man to enjoy Paradise but once. If I possess Damascus I lose heaven."—Selected.

1004. Gone Out—Back Soon.

She was a physician's wife. He was a man of a strong, sunny nature, who carried good cheer into his patients' homes, to sustain them in weakness and discouragement, and still carried back enough to fill his own home. His frail wife needed all the sunshine and vigor of his personality to sustain her; and it did not fail. She seemed to live so much by the strength of his spirit that when he passed away suddenly after a month of especially hard work, her friends said, "It will kill her!"

But the ties between husband and wife were too strong to be broken by the incident of death. The memories of the past were as real as his presence had been. The religious life and the faith in God that they two had shared together did not fail her. By the doorway of the living-room she fastened the card that he had sometimes left, in short absences, on his office door:

GONE OUT—BACK SOON

Those who came with consolation went away, themselves consoled. They felt behind this frail form and lips that smiled while they quivered, a mysterious power, a spiritual experience that had united two souls in a marriage that death itself could not annul. More than one went out from her presence to find, in the years that followed, a strong, although secret consolation, in the deathless companionship, through memory, of his lost ones, and in the cheery suggestion of that brief message. The Gospel of Jesus is in those four words: Gone out.—Back soon. —Youth's Companion.

1005. Acquaintances in Heaven.

"When I was a boy," said a minister, "I thought of heaven as a great shining city, with vast walls and domes and spires, and with nobody in it except white tenuous angels, who were strangers to me. By and by my little brother died, and I thought of a great city with walls, and domes, and spires, and a flock of cold, unknown angels, and one little fellow that I was acquainted with. He was the only one I knew at that time. Then another brother died and there were two that I knew. Then my acquaintances began to die, and the flock continually grew; but it was not until I had sent one of my little children to his grandparent—God—that I began to think that I had a little in myself. A second went, a third went, a fourth went; and by that time I had so many acquaintances in heaven that I did not see any more walls and domes and spires. I began to think of the residents of the Celestial City; and now there are so many of my acquaintances gone there that it sometimes seems to me that I know more in heaven than I do on earth." —Selected.

1006. Friends in Heaven.

Mr. Moody once told the story of a man who in a dream went to heaven and became acquainted with a glorious saint. After a while they began to speak of their earthly lives. "I came from America," said one of them. "So did I," said the other. "I was brought up in the city of H." "So was I." "I was a member of Dr. Huss' church." "Why, so was I." And yet they had to go to heaven to get acquainted.

—H. F. Sayles.

1007. Heavenly Recognition.

When John Evans, the Scotch minister, was seated in his study, his wife came in and said to him, "My dear, do you think we will know each other in heaven?" He turned to her and said, "My dear, do you think we shall be bigger fools in heaven than we are here?" —Selected Sermons.

1008. End of the Way.

There was a boy travelling through the west and it was a long journey he had over the prairies. He sat in the railway train alone by himself. It was a day when the sun burned down with tremendous heat. It was a day when the dust was filling the car and everybody noticed that that boy in his loneliness was happier and more contented than all the rest. He looked out over the sand and seemed to see what no one else saw. Finally a lady walked across the aisle and, leaning down to him, said: "My boy, I have been thinking about you to-day. Do you not get very tired taking this long journey?" "Well," he said, "I do not think I am very tired. It is hot and it is dusty. It is more than I thought it was going to be, but I am happy. I am happy because father is going to meet me at the end of the journey."—Cortland Myers, D.D.

1009. Homeland.

Life changes all our thoughts of heaven:
At first we think of streets of gold,
Of gates of pearl and dazzling light,
Of shining wings and robes of white,
And things all strange to mortal sight.
But in the afterwards of years
It is a more familiar place,
A home unhurt by sighs or tears,
Where waiteth many a well-known face.
With passing months it comes more near,
It grows more real day by day.
Not strange or cold, but very dear—
The glad homeland, not far away,
Where none are sick or poor or lone,
The place where we shall find our own.
And as we think of all we knew
Who there have met to part no more,
Our longing hearts desire home, too,
With all the strife and longing o'er.

—Robert Browning.

1010. Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus!

Beyond the smiling and the weeping,
Beyond the waking and the sleeping,
Beyond the sowing and the reaping,
I shall be soon!
Love, rest, and home—
Sweet home! Lord, tarry not, but come!

Beyond the blooming and the fading,
Beyond the shining and the shading,
Beyond the hoping and the dreading,
I shall be soon!
Love, rest, and home—
Sweet home! Lord, tarry not, but come!

Beyond the parting and the meeting,
Beyond the farewell and the greeting,
Beyond the pulse's fever beating,
I shall be soon!
Love, rest, and home—
Sweet home! Lord, tarry not, but come!

—Horatius Bonar.